Dance and Dancers

JUNE 1954

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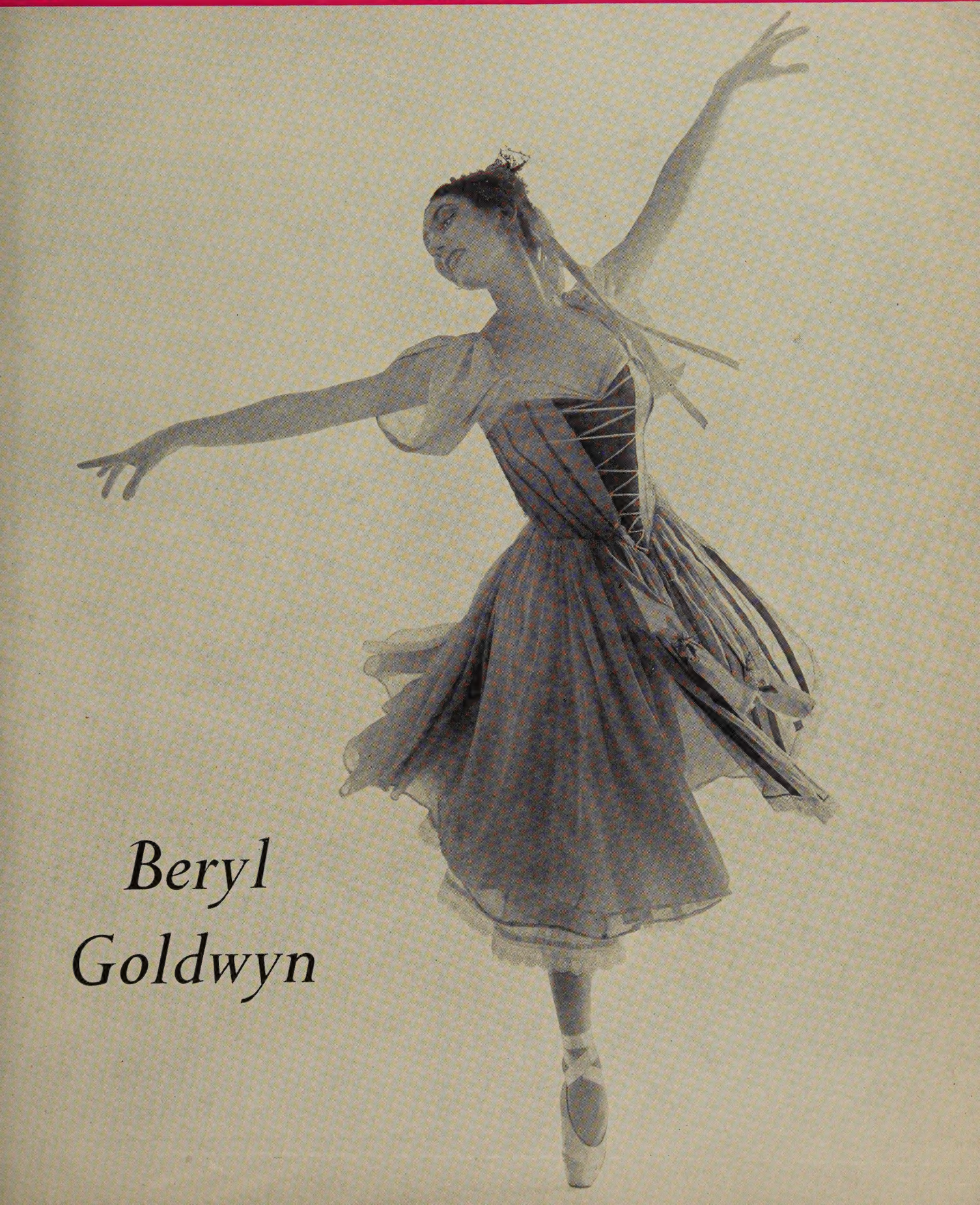

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Personality of the month

IGOR STRAVINSKY **Reason: None needed unless it be for the fact that he is conducting here after a lapse of many years.**

IT is not easy to decide which has given more to which: the ballet to Igor Stravinsky or Stravinsky to the ballet. If it was ballet which brought this dynamic Russian composer to world notice, Stravinsky was already well-equipped for the task.

Perhaps it is an expression of his debt to ballet that the programme he conducts in May at the Festival Hall, on this his first visit to London for many years, will be composed entirely of works he has written for ballet: the *Divertimento, Scenes de Ballet, Orpheus,* and *Petrouchka.*

A pupil of Rimsky-Korsakoff, whose colourful music had added in *Schéhérazade* to the dynamic impact made by Russian Ballet on Western Europe, Stravinsky was chosen by Diaghilev to write the score of *The Firebird,* his first original contribution to ballet, in 1910. There followed *Petrouchka* in similar vein in 1912, and the sensational *Rite of Spring* of 1913. Once more Diaghilev had justified his choice of a new and almost unknown contributor to the composite art of ballet.

This music probably exerted on all Western European music more influence than that of any other composer, an influence that is still apparent in the many ballet scores coming from French composers of today. If Stravinsky himself has to a large extent abandoned his earlier method of dazzling colour and violent contrast, in favour of more formally classical musical design, he has left behind him a trail that is still blazing among his younger contemporaries.

Today, at 72, Stravinsky is as vital a force in music as he was when he first burst upon a startled ballet audience more than 40 years ago. The latest of his scores specially written for ballet, Orpheus, is music that will stand on its own feet just as have *The Firebird* and *Petrouchka,* ideally suited for its original purpose, but at the same time music in its own right, conveying through formal simplicity a message as powerful as that hammered home in more forceful accents in *The Rite of Spring.*

Ballet put Igor Stravinsky on the first rungs of the ladder to world fame. In return it has received from him a noble heritage that is still being drawn upon and which looks like a storehouse of material and inspiration for a long time to come.

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Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS
Assistant Editor: CLIVE BARNES

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Revival is not survival

CELEBRATIONS to mark the twenty-five years since the death of Diaghilev are now taking place in all parts of the globe. It is splendid news that all manner and kind of persons have become conscious of the fact that they owe an enormous debt to this truly remarkable man. The exhibition which Richard Buckle is organising for the Edinburgh Festival should be proof positive of what Diaghilev achieved in his lifetime and how much he influenced every branch of art; an influence which is still felt as strongly as at the time he died. Many of his masterpieces of ballet are being revived by companies everywhere and very nice it will be to see some of them again.

But in this general welter of revival are we not, perhaps, forgetting one thing? Are we not forgetting exactly what Diaghilev stood for? A study of his achievement makes it pretty clear that in everything he did he was many, many years ahead of his time. He was the first to discard a work when he felt its time was past, he was the first to ferret out some new trend and turn it to his use. He, surely, most truly stood for progress.

Would he, one wonders, have bestowed his blessing on the continual revival of the works he gave to the world? Never having had the fortune to meet him I am hardly in a position to say, but I am certain that much of what is now put out bearing his name would have provoked many an angry grunt and a throwing-up of hands in despair.

The trouble with today's ballet is that it has become obsessed with revival. If it is not a work from the Diaghilev repertoire then it is a post-Diaghilev ballet or one of the classics of the nineteenth century. Because it is good for the box-office and a question of playing safe, presumably these revivals will continue *ad nauseum.*

But what a sorry state it is when anything that attempts to be new is treated with scorn! Let us have our classics by all means, they are essential for the foundation of a company and for the training of dancers. Let us have our revivals of other works, if they are worthy of it. But don't for heaven's sake let us get bogged down in the rut that panders to public opinion and the box office. Because if we do, then ballet will die naturally even quicker than some newspapers are trying to kill it off.

Diaghilev would, I am sure, have considered the path of Martha Graham or the sincere attempt at discovery in *Les Algues* to be a far greater tribute to what he stood for than a revival of—well, I won't mention names.

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SVETLANA BERIOSOVA in the last act of *Sylvia*. During the present season of the Sadler's Wells Ballet at Covent Garden, she has taken over a number of important roles. The title role in *Sylvia* she danced for the first time in America with considerable success, a success which has now been repeated in London. Her Swanilda in *Coppelia* has already been acclaimed and on June 1 she is dancing, for the first time, Princess Aurora in the full-length *Sleeping Beauty*. Other principal roles she has recently taken over are in *Veneziana* and the Queen of Water in *Homage to the Queen*.

Photo: Houston Rogers

Marie Rambert corrects her pupils at the Mercury Theatre studio.
Photo: Derek Allen

Campden to Kew—and back

Marie Rambert's company will be in London again in June—in Battersea Park and at Sadler's Wells Theatre. This journey was taken so as to try and find the secret of how this remarkable person has managed to produce so many great dancers and choreographers.

by PETER WILLIAMS

MARIE RAMBERT was sitting on the front steps of her Campden Hill house taking advantage of the first genuine appearance of the spring sun. "We will go to Kew," she declared, "it is always so much easier to talk there. I went there once with Vera Volkova and we had a lovely time."

A lovely time was not quite what I had in mind as my real mission was to try and find out how it is that Rambert has managed to produce most of the great dancers of the world; what are the secrets of this remarkable woman—this sorceress—who can still produce more tricks out of a hat, or cauldron, than anyone else in ballet.

Perhaps, I thought to myself, she is intending to collect some simples for her brew from the gardens of Kew. However it is twenty years since I have been there and it's a lovely day, so what better way of spending a Sunday afternoon.

The bus was so crowded with people obviously with the same thought in mind that I could not see much chance of finding out what I wanted to know. Stupidly I had not reckoned on Rambert.

How to predict talent

"No, I don't size up my pupils the moment they come to me," she informed the bus in general, "I never judge them from their conversation but study the way they respond to correction particularly in the placing of their feet and arms." By this time the top of the bus was all agog and an ominous silence had settled on their conversation, the true sign that everyone is listening to what you are saying.

"Some pupils come only with the idea of dance and they think the *barre* is a bore. You hear them say 'We did wonderful steps today.' I really have no use for these people. I look for those who enjoy essential movement and who have an interest in the very roots of dancing. It is, of course, a most slow process but I feel it is so imperative to get at the core because if the foundation is wrong a house will eventually fall down."

By now, the bus had reached Hammersmith where it stopped for some time to change drivers and conductors. This meant that unhampered by the noise of the engine the passengers were hearing a great deal for their money. In addition, a whole lot had got on and the second house was well under way.

"All through the period of training I try to rid people of idiosyncrasies. Those that refuse to be got rid of are probably so personal that they can eventually be used to form a personality. At the *barre*, pupils should be made to feel the different pleasure that each movement gives. And I do not mean that everything should be sentimental and romantic—there are certain strong movements and certain soft movements and the whole body should respond accordingly. I also try to instil a response to music right from the very beginning. This, I know, is of vital importance."

By this time we had left the bus, much to the regret of the passengers who felt they were getting a free class. "What was the lady talking about?" said a small child as we pushed our way out.

Kew was at its best with daffodils, cherries and magnolias in full flower and the grass looking for all the world like an expensive billiard-table.

"How beautiful it is," declared Rambert, all ballet forgotten faced by the incredible wonder of spring. "We used to come here with the children and my husband carried Angela on his shoulders and now she herself is expecting her second baby."

Severe classical training

"The swans are dangerous," said a stern notice by the lakeside seat where we eventually flopped down to continue our conversation. "I insist on a severe classical training with the simplest line which is also the most noble. It is the simplest movement and line which shows any mistakes. If the pupil can master these essential things then he will eventually be able to master the most complicated. In much the same way that a pianist who can play Bach will eventually be able to play modern composers without difficulty."

"But don't misunderstand me when I say a thing is simple. This does not mean that it is at all simple to do; that would give a very wrong impression. To give the appearance of simplicity is the hardest thing of all. But this simplicity frees the personality and frees the capacity for movement.

"This great emphasis on elementary mechanics is specially necessary when people reach the stage of dancing in the theatre and have to dance a variety of styles.

"For them, more than anyone, the simplest movements are essential in class—slow movements, slow *dégagés* to develop *batterie* and very careful placing of the body. When dancers have got to this stage and have to be brought out as artists, I concentrate even more on developing consciousness of physical sensation in movement. This is probably why the *Les Sylphides* which we give has always been so warmly received by the critics and public. It is because the dancers *feel* the romantic Chopin music and choreography of Fokine."

"But always," and here the determined little figure of Rambert got more determined than ever, "always I demand absolute integrity in the effort. I think I can say that I have always had integrity myself and I insist on it from all who work with me. I can usually gauge an artist in his response to correction and it is extraordinary how much it varies."

By the time we had got on to the subject of choreographers we had reached a magnificent clump of magnolia trees. "I just wait for them to burst with desire," and for a moment I did not quite know whether she meant the magnolias, which were certainly showing an urge to break out into full flower, or the choreographers for whom she more than anyone has been responsible.

Choreographers discouraged at first

"No, I don't go to them, I wait for them to come to me and then I discourage them for quite a while. Only with Frederick Ashton did I not adopt this policy as he came to me, when he was a young boy, and showed me some interesting movements which he felt to be right for a ballet by somebody else. From what he showed me it seemed obvious that he would have great talent as a choreographer so I encouraged him.

"But of course, different people need different treatment. As a rule I do not encourage them until I have a pretty good idea of their nature, then I will try them out in some dance to see how they do.

"Here again I concentrate on developing their integrity, to be honest about principals, because I know that this is the only way to make a work last. Some choreographers I know I have been able to guide because they cannot always see a work as the audience sees it; others have not needed guidance so much as encouragement."

As the sun started to set we wended our way home, this time on a variety of buses as change is the breath of life to Rambert. "I have no particular theories about the production of classics. *Giselle* is the only full-length one in our repertoire. Here I was anxious to get a faithful reproduction and to keep as much as what I imagined the original to be. To me it has a fine story, so touching. It is not at all conventional but a great tragedy which I really believe in. I hope we have managed to make others feel the same way about it."

Back at Campden Hill Gardens there was certain chaos—a globe of garlic was missing. It had been searched for high and low and all attempts at buying another on a Sunday evening had proved quite unsuccessful. Disaster seemed imminent; to the salad, to Rambert's husband's diet and to the honour of the faithful Helen.

"Well, here it is!" said Rambert, going to the sideboard cupboard where an intensive search had already been made. Salad, diet and honour were saved and I swear that she conjured garlic out of thin air just as she has materialised dancers and choreographers in the past—and will do in the future.

Pal Joey, *at Princes Theatre, is a musical of the late 'thirties. The dances by Robert Alton are typical of the kind that would be seen in sleezy American night club of the period. At that time, ballet choreographers had not broken into musicals in the big way that they have today. The routines were stereotyped, the costumes be-plumed and be-sequined; all this Alton has tried to recapture. Jean Brampton and Malcolm Goddard are seen with the girls in* That Terrific Rainbow. *Photo: Roger Wood*

Dancing in London's musicals

Another number from the Rodgers-Hart musical, Pal Joey. *Jean Brampton and Lionel Blair (left) are seen in the opening number—* You Mustn't Kick It Around. *Jean Brampton, who has scored one of the big hits of the show, was at one time a dancer at the Windmill Theatre. The title role of Joey was played by Harold Lang, remembered here as a dancer with New York City Ballet, but he has now returned to America and the role has been taken over by Richard France. Photo: Roger Wood*

One of the most successful of intimate revues is Airs on a Shoestring *at the Royal Court Theatre. It has already run almost a year and is all set for another year. One of the outstanding features of this show is the performance of Moyra Fraser who is seen here with Max Adrian in* Taken as Red—or Hiawatha at the Albert Hall. *For many years Moyra Fraser was a soloist of the Sadler's Wells Ballet. The choreography for this revue is by Alfred Rodrigues. Photo: Houston Rogers*

Hans May's Wedding in Paris *at the Hippodrome will go down to history as the show in which Evelyn Laye made the most stupendous come-back. The ballets and dance numbers are the work of Walter Gore, one of which is shown here. Photo: Roger Wood*

Louis-Bertrand Castelli looks at the world with the mind of a poet

It's the idea that counts

Or the story of Louis-Bertrand Castelli who was responsible for *Les Algues*.

by PETER WILLIAMS

THE art of ballet, we are told with unfailing regularity, is a composite one in which the composer, choreographer and designer combine to make a theatrical fusion.

So concerned are we with this holy trinity that we frequently forget another person without whom it is possible that the great ballets of history might never have seen the light of day—namely the person with ideas, the person who wrote the book.

Where, for instance, would *Giselle* have got to without that fine poet and critic, Théophile Gautier? Where would the later ballets of Diaghilev have got to without Jean Cocteau or Boris Kochno? Where indeed.

Today, ballet in its search for new forms and new paths of expression desperately needs the person with ideas. There are plenty of choreographers and composers but they all bemoan the fact that it is difficult to get new ideas. The ideas department is really a section by itself because the others have enough to concentrate on with their own particular branch of art.

Such people are hard to find. They need not necessarily be great writers for that can be rather limiting. They should be a mixture of poet, painter, composer with a sense of the theatre and the needs of the dance. Rare indeed such creatures are because the boundary between a good and a bad idea is of razor-edge thickness and only the genius knows upon which territory his idea lies.

For this reason, Louis-Bertrand Castelli, who was responsible for *Les Algues* which Ballets de France de Janine Charrat so memorably gave during their recent London season, seems to be the man that we may be waiting for.

"THE only member of my family whoever had any theatrical connection was a saint—Santa Maria-José Castelli. Sometime around the end of the last century he performed miracles in Corsica. Surely the highest form of theatrical art!" So begins the story of half-French half-Italian Castelli.

While still at a University, Castelli became fascinated by the rhythm and excitement of a negro dance troupe. An aunt having conveniently died and left him some money he started the Ballets Nègres.

Completely lacking in theatrical experience he seemed, at this early stage, to know what made good theatre. When his company opened at Les Ambassadeurs in Deauville he was disgusted by the fact that people continued to eat and talk all through the performance. He hit on the idea of getting the dancers to jump over the balustrade, separating the stage from the rest of the room, and perform on the dance floor proper. This brought the dancers right in amongst the diners who were so terrified at the close proximity of these wild dances that they did not dare to eat; the noise was certainly too great for them to talk. The show was instantly a huge success.

Ingenuity in Deauville

One of the performances was a gala at which it was essential to wear evening dress. Castelli had no dinner jacket as he could not afford it. So what does he do? He borrows some trousers from the *Maitre d'hotel*; a jacket from the orchestra leader. Even then there were difficulties because the trousers were so short (Castelli is very tall) that he had to walk about behind tables or any convenient object so as to hide the fact that the bottoms of his trousers were halfway up his calves.

Added to this there were two bands and two orchestra leaders, both of whom needed their jackets before appearing in public. So the evening consisted of continual journeys behind concealing objects in order to make the necessary jacket changes. The ingenuity needed to carry out the evening with dignity must have been considerable.

Whether as a result of this quick-change performance or because he genuinely admired the Ballet Nègres, the Aga Khan was so impressed that he gave Castelli a million francs to help the company.

The next venture was to produce *The Emperor Jones* at the Odéon in Paris which Castelli admits was a great mistake. The effect was good but it began to dawn on him that, in spite of his saintly forebear he really did not know a great deal about the theatre. The obvious thing to do was to learn, so off he went to Vienna where he worked with Professor Kainer (an assistant of Max Reinhardt). From working at the Vienna Opera in various capacities, Castelli learnt most of what is needed for anyone to make their way in the professional theatre.

During his time in Vienna he saw Berg's opera, *Wozzek*, which made an enormous impression on him and must have given him the idea for the ballet which eventually became *Les Algues*, first conceived as an opera.

After his Vienna period he returned to Paris where he did a variety of things—scene painting, lighting for Carmen Amaya, decors for José Estrada and so on. He produced shows in Belgium and Holland. All of which gave him an insight into every aspect of the theatre.

But the idea of an opera about a lunatic asylum was getting hold of him, so through a relation he managed to get a job in an asylum for six weeks. During that time he developed an understanding of the behaviour of people who are forced to spend some of their lives in such institutions.

Private worlds

Mad people dance, he discovered, where normal people talk. This discovery led him to consider the possibility of *Les Algues* being more suitable for a ballet than an opera. They hear music, we hear noises. Their world, that private world they live on their own, is a beautiful world; ours is a world of ugliness, of the underground railway, of

His first work for Charrat. Le Colleur D'Affiches *with Charrat (centre) and the famous posters in the background which helped to the eventual realisation of* Les Algues. *Photos: Lipnitzki*

the factory, of hideous rush and bustle which gets us nowhere in particular. Their movements are all to music—*concrète* music.

But many things were to happen before anyone would dare to put such a controversial subject on the stage. Dolin, Skibine, Babilée, Madame Volterra (director of the Marigny Theatre) and many others were not impressed with the idea. Neither were the composers; Sauguet, Auric, Kosma, all refused. It was a gamble which none of them, and one can hardly blame them, was willing to take. Anyway Castelli was a comparatively unknown quantity at this time.

The final acceptance of this work came about in a very roundabout way and was yet another proof of Castelli's ingenuity in overcoming obstacles.

The great bluff

He managed to interest Charrat in a work of a quite different nature. This ballet, *Le Colleur d'Affiches* (the bill-board sticker), used the posters of twelve well-known firms who were represented by the dancers. Among them being: Marquise de Sevigne (chocolates), Byrrh (apéritif), Airwick, Mazda (lamp-bulbs), Scandale (stockings), Panzani (spaghetti), Maille (mustard) and so on.

The ballet will not probably go down to history as being of any earth-shattering importance, but the consequences may.

By this time, Castelli had no money at all as all that he had inherited from his aunt had long since been spent on Ballets Nègres; all that he had earned since could hardly have been enough to mount a large-scale work. However, he knew that he would get a certain amount from the various firms who were represented in *Le Colleur D'Affiches*. Emboldened by this knowledge he impressed Janine Charrat and her management that he was a very rich person.

He descended upon the company, then playing at Lisieux in Normandy, gave a huge dinner party and made it clear that he had seven million francs to spend on a new work and that he also had the Champs-Elysées Theatre.

So impressed was everyone that the contract was signed there and then; Castelli demanded complete freedom to work as he chose as well as Guy Bernard to compose the music (he had previously been deeply impressed with this composer's work for the Picasso film *Guernica*).

Although he had realised his ambition in mounting *Les Algues*, his troubles were really just beginning. He had to continually think of ways of hiding the fact that he had no money. He had to paint the scenery himself as he could not afford to put it in the hands of a scene-painter, he had to work with the composer on the unusual wedding of the music to the new music *concrète*, he had to find money somehow. All the morning he rehearsed the company, then after lunch he shut himself away in his studio frequently working all night as well.

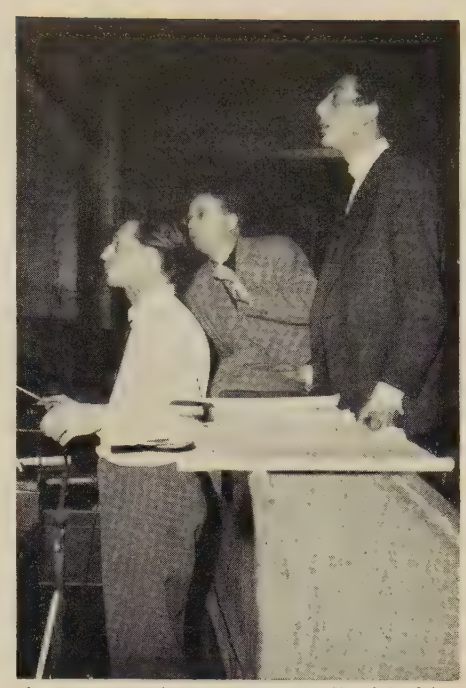
Everyone was awful to him but such was his faith in himself that he managed to pull through. He told Charrat the story of ballet in little bits and then had everything changed just for the sake of having them changed. He struggled all the time to get the money from the manufacturers and handed it out in bits. Everyone thought him very eccentric but never suspected that he still had no money. It was a great gamble but it came off.

Horizons widen

Les Algues was a success from the start but a great deal needed doing to it. The ballet was far too long and much of the scenery needed re-designing. Since the opening performance most of the initial faults have been put right though even now there are changes being made—not, this time, for the sake of making them but because they are necessary.

Last year, the Marquis de Cuevas summoned Castelli to mount a work at short notice. For this Castelli thought that Jerome Robbins, as choreographer, and Guy Bernard, as composer, would be ideal. The Marquis, however, had other ideas as he wished for a member of his company, particularly Golovine, to create a new work. The result was *Feux Rouges, Feux Verts*.

It was mounted in too great a hurry and Golovine was already tired from a long Paris season. Nor was it possible to have enough rehearsals. Castelli, the perfectionist, wanted



A rehearsal of Les Algues. *Daniel Stirn (conductor for Ballets Janine Charrat), Guy Bernard (composer) and Castelli.*

to stop the ballet from going on but the need for money to pay off back debts was too strong. The work went on and did not amount to an unqualified success though most people agreed that Castelli's contribution—book, decor, and production—was worthwhile. It may have started a partnership that can be developed in the future because Castelli believes that Golovine has considerable choreographic possibilities.

Castelli's career is only just starting but if only for *Les Algues* his contribution to the art of ballet is not inconsiderable. He is so bubbling with ideas that it is to be hoped that all possible use is made of them. Perhaps Santa Marie-José, whom Louis-Bertrand closely resembles, started something with those miracles in Corsica.

Insularity breeds contempt

DEAR ESME,*

Of course Margot is divine, and Michael, and Bobby before him—all your Christian-named deities are simply ripping. The Sadler's Wells Ballet at Covent Garden and its annexe in Islington are, in the words of the great Mr. Hurok, fabulous. But, please believe me, ballet neither starts in Bow Street nor ends in Rosebery Avenue.

"Buy British" is a slogan of some importance to our national economy; when applied to the Arts it is a stultifying expression of petty chauvinism. No man is an island, nor any art either, and for us to adopt an attitude of narrow-minded insularity towards dancing is, in the long run, the greatest disservice one can do to our own stripling national ballet.

The leading ballet companies and dance groups in the world come to London. They come expecting the finest and best-informed audience and criticism, but all too often they depart with memories of empty houses and dispiriting applause, carrying a slim packet of press-cuttings, many of which read as if they had been cooked-up by illiterate office-boys.

Yet you, my dear Esme, persist in regarding London as a capital of world dance. I have news for you—it isn't.

In 1946 you stayed away from the Ballets des Champs Elysées' first season at the Adelphi Theatre, and you have been staying away from almost everything of any importance (excluding Sadler's Wells and Festival Ballet) ever since.

Sometimes you made a tentative excursion to see one of these infernal foreigners, found them different from your much gloated-over favourites and thereupon dismissed them as inferior.

Balanchine you decided was "mechanical," French ballet was either "silly" or "clever, but—"(so many of your judgments on foreign ballets end with a "but" followed by an audible dash, which may be translated as "not the Wells"), Graham was "ugly," Charrat's *Les Algues* was "unsuitable," Jerome Robbins was—why continue? Somehow you have damned pretty well everything, and stayed away in thousands.

Nor is this insularity confined to your opinion of foreigners. Certain English ballet is beneath your notice. You let the Metropolitan Ballet die, you shamefully neglect the Ballet Rambert. Nothing pleases you but the familiar.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am not criticising the Sadler's Wells Organisation—far from it—but *your* attitude to it. You disregard the ballets and drool over the dancers. Because you have day-dreamed your way through fifty performances of *Swan Lake*, you set yourself up as an authority.

Yet you have no knowledge of any of the arts, and have never danced a step in your life. You are unobservant, bigoted and ridiculous.

If you really are sincere in your love for ballet, bring your enthusiasm to all ballet. Go to visiting companies and go again. See their virtues and their faults, use them to deepen your understanding of the contemporary ballet.

Then perhaps you will be able to join that section of the audience that, by its intelligent appreciation, helps to govern the direction ballet is taking in this country.

But, of course, you will continue in your age-old way. Nothing is good enough for you but the Wells, and even they are never as good as they were two seasons ago.

I despise you, my dear Esme, and I regret that you will never read this letter. But then you never do read a ballet magazine, even though you occasionally glance at the photographs over someone else's shoulder. So you must go your way and we must go ours.

Yours, **Clive Barnes**

* Esme is, needless to say, fictional. His name is taken from a brilliant pen-portrait of the "balleptomaine" type by the noted authropologist Geoffrey Gorer, which appeared last year in *Punch*.

CANADIAN BALLET STEPS OUT 2

The first 'Royal' British company

This year is an important one in the annals of Canadian ballet because its two principal companies have started to widen their horizon. Here are some facts about the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.

ON October 16, 1951, the Winnipeg Ballet had the honour to perform before Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh during their tour through Canada. Thus being the first Canadian ballet company to be so privileged. In 1953, Queen Elizabeth II graciously granted permission for the company to include the word "Royal" in its corporate name; a second honour, and one shared by no other ballet company in the British Empire.

It has taken sixteen years for the company to go through all the pioneering and teething stages which are inevitable in the establishment of a company. All of which was entirely due to Gweneth Lloyd, founder and Artistic Director, and Betty Farrally, the producer and Ballet Mistress.

Left and above. Two scenes from Gweneth Lloyd's The Shooting of Dan McGrew *based on Robert Service's famous poem. The setting is by John Russell and Joseph Chabas, the costumes by Davis Yeddeau. Photos: Harold White*

Gweneth Lloyd started the Winnipeg Ballet Club in much the same way as Marie Rambert started the Ballet Club in Ladbroke Road. From these small beginnings when, as Miss Lloyd explains "no one could dance but we picked the potential," the club developed into a local company and from that into a national company.

It must have been a pioneering job in the true sense of the word because when she first arrived in Canada with her star pupil—Betty Farrally—few Canadians had seen ballet nor had they any desire to see it. But that determination and dedication, which brought De Valois and Rambert through the difficult years, also carried these first ladies of Canadian ballet through. Today there are a mass of ambitious groups all across Canada which is entirely due to the work originally done in Winnipeg.

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet has not been built-up on great names and only Paddy Stone has achieved international fame. But with the successful tour of America, recently made, and a tour of Europe, possibly in the near future, there is no doubt that an ever-widening public will become conscious of the potentiality of Canada as a new incubator for dancers. A great part of the company is Canadian born and bred; Arnold Spohr (the principal male dancer, also choreographer) comes from Saskatchewan, Carlu Carter from Winnipeg, Bill McGrath fom Vancouver, while Eva Von Gencsy and Jean Stoneham come from Hungary and Scotland respectively but they have worked in Canada for so long that they can almost be considered to be Canadians. So much for the principals, the soloists and the *corps de ballet* are almost completely native.

Gweneth Lloyd has created many works for the company but probably the two most important are those with a local background —*The Shooting of Dan McGrew* and *Shadow on the Prairie*—both of which have enjoyed great success. There is obviously a great wealth of material in Canada—from legend, folk-dance and music—that should make ideal ballet material and the use that Miss Lloyd has made of it is the right foundation upon which to build a national repertoire.

We now look to Canada to supply a strong link in that chain of British ballet that is gradually encircling the globe.

Alicia Markova surrounded by the company after her performance of Dying Swan *and, right, with Roman Jasinsky in* Les Sylphides. *Markova danced these works as well as* Bolero 1830, *at guest performances in Winnipeg and also when the company appeared in Washington on its first American tour.*

The importance of ballet films

It becomes increasingly obvious that the film is the only satisfactory way of recording ballet. The present season at the National Film Theatre should make this clear to everyone.

by
PETER BRINSON

Left: Anna Pavlova.

Ballerinas come and go but nobody has touched the public imagination to the extent of the greatest of all artists of the dance. To many who have never even seen ballet, Pavlova and the dance are almost synonymous.

Many of those who never saw her have frequently questioned the fact that she was as great as people said. Their contention, often true, is that the years cloud everything in a rosy glow. The film of her, recently unearthed and now being shown at the National Film Theatre, proves once and for all and for future generations that Pavlova was a sublime artist.

It is even further proof of the great service that the cinema can render to the art of ballet—not only for recording eminent dancers of the past but as a guide to the choreography of a ballet and its particular style.

Photo kindly lent by the British Film Institute Library.

THE season of ballet films at the National Film Theatre makes very clear the great importance of the cinema to ballet. It emphasises in particular the value of using films to capture the performance of a great dancer and to record the choreography of ballets for the future.

But for an accident there might now be no record of Pavlova, and but for Madame Rambert's friends, Mr. and Mrs. Duff, who were amateur film-makers and members of the Ballet Club, the beginnings of British ballet might never have been recorded for us to see.

Madame Rambert's material must be unique in the world. Here are two of Frederick Ashton's earliest ballets, Ashton himself, Gore, Andrée Howard, the young Toumanova and the whole of *L'Apres Midi d'un Faun* with the original choreography as a perfect example of the way in which choreography can be recorded cheaply and quickly for reference.

In 1933 when most of the films were shot on a 16 mm. camera during actual performances in the tiny Mercury Theatre the dancers they recorded were known only to very few people. Later some of them became the stars of de Basil's Ballet Russe and others today are world famous as the founders and leaders of British Ballet. The Rambert films are a kind of Wellsian time machine turning back history to see how all this began.

Skilled amateurs

The quality of the films is a permanent memorial to the skill of Madame Rambert's friends as film-makers. They have given us something which no history book, painter or critic could ever give us. Wisely, Madame Rambert has allowed copies of their work to be preserved for all time in the archives of the National Film Library and the British Film Institute is generously helping to preserve the existing prints.

The Pavlova film is in a rather different category but no less valuable. This is not a record of an actual performance but a private film of brief fragments which Pavlova danced light-heartedly, almost jokingly, in 1924, for her friend Fairbanks. He had asked her for something which he could show at a party in Hollywood a few days later. So she danced on the sets of a *A Thief of Baghdad* which he was making at the time, never dreaming that this quickly made film would one day be treasured as the only worthwhile record, however incomplete and fragmentary, of one of the world's greatest dancers.

It makes us remember that films today are not only a means of entertainment but, like books, have become a way to knowledge, reference libraries for the present and the past. For students of the transient, momentary art of the dance, a library of ballet films is now a necessity.

An experiment in time

How best to use and present this reference library, "these shadows," as Rambert called them when she discussed the ballet season with Denis Forman, Director of the Film Institute and myself, is something which needs much thought, the aesthetic problems and the ethics, for example, of adding music to Pavlova's little dances. When I was asked to produce the sound version of this film these things had to be considered, as well as the difficult technical problems involved. After all, it is not often that the visuals of a film are shot thirty years before the sound track is recorded!

In this case the project would have been impossible without the generous guidance of a group of members of Pavlova's company who knew the dances, among them Joan Van Wart, and without the musical skill of Leighton Lucas, the conductor, a former dancer with Diaghilev.

Leighton Lucas collected and arranged the music; his unique combination of musical and dancing knowledge enabled him to follow and anticipate Pavlova's movements on the screen so that the synchronisation could be as perfect as possible. It would have been a much more difficult task had he not had this dancing knowledge because the tempo of the film alters occasionally; the result, I suspect, of a hand-cranked camera!

Anyway I hope the result justifies the attempt which was only undertaken after we were sure, as DANCE AND DANCERS wrote last month, that the fragments themselves enhance the reputation of Pavlova. I think they do. What is more, the film being there, I think it would have been hard to justify any other treatment.

Dances from everywhere

Those who saw Pavlova may prefer to remember her surrounded by the colour and mystery of the theatre. But for the millions of the future who never saw her, we have a responsibility to Pavlova herself and to ballet history, to present these fragments in the best possible way without trying to disguise them as anything but studio fragments. This was the reason why we decided to use a piano instead of an orchestra which would have been out of keeping with the atmosphere of the visuals. The music gives these shadows of the great ballerina a substance and life they would not otherwise have.

The rest of the three week programme at the Film Theatre only emphasises more the service cinema can give to the ballet. I have tried to choose a programme which is not only an all colour but a thoroughly international programme reflecting the dancing of many nations—America's special contribution of the modern dance (*Moor's Pavane*) and dancing for the cinema (*An American in Paris*), British ballet on the screen (Shearer in *The Red Shoes*, and Beryl Grey in *The Black Swan*, the world's first 3-D ballet), Russian ballet with Ulanova, folk dancing (the Hungarian *Wedding at Ecser* and the Polish *Masowsze*) and the Indian ballet from Renoir's *The River*.

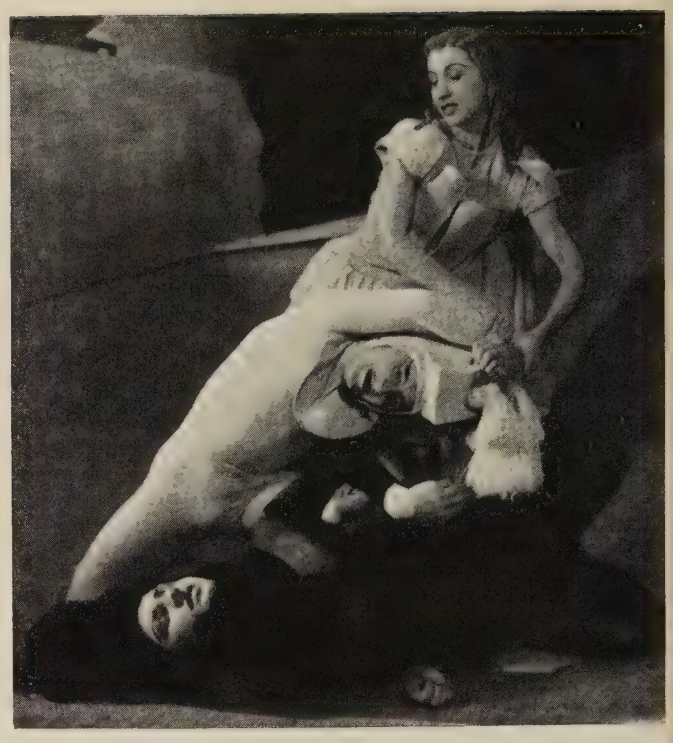
Are further records existing?

Three points occurred to me in particular as I studied the films. The first two are matters for regret. What a shame it is that we have no worthy record of our own *prima ballerina assoluta*. Is it really not possible that a film could be made which would do her justice? I regret also that more use is not made of the cinema to record ballets and choreography for practical purposes. Would such films not save their cost in money by shortening the hours of rehearsal?

Thirdly, I thought, if the film of Pavlova and Madame Rambert's collection has helped us to study and understand more about ballet in the twentieth century, and if both of these, as it were, were made almost accidentally, might there not be more such accidents? Are there any more private records perhaps of de Basil's company, perhaps some fleeting glimpse of Diaghilev?

Some records exist for sure. Massine and Balanchine both use films in their work. But what of others in Britain? Could we not collect them and preserve them? Perhaps those who know will tell us where to look.

Peter Brinson is the editor of the new monthly magazine, *Films and Filming*, which Hansom Books will publish in October. The new magazine is a companion to *Dance and Dancers*, *Music and Musicians*, and *Plays and Players*.



After a struggle between the wild horses and Amazons, all the horses are killed except for the White Horse (Rene Bon) who is captured by an Amazon who tries to tame him. Photo: Donitz

Right: The Queen of the Amazons (Charrat) kills the horses in battle. Photo: Lido

LE MASSACRE DES AMAZONS

First London performance by Ballets de France de Janine Charrat on April 9, 1954. Ballet by Janine Charrat and Maurice Sarrazin. Music by Ivan K. Semenoff. Choreography by Janine Charrat. Decor and costumes by Jean Bazaine.

Cast

The Queen of the Amazons - - - - - - JANINE CHARRAT
The White Horse - - - - - - - - - RENE BON
The Black Horses - - - - JEAN BLANCHARD, ESTEBAN CERDA
The Amazons and The Amazons' Horses

THERE are those ballets that are the vehicles for choreographic expression, and those ballets that are the vehicles for dancers. *Le Massacre des Amazons* is of the latter category, in fact it is more of a triumphal chariot than a vehicle, and very successfully did René Bon, its destined occupant, ride in it.

The primary aim of the ballet appeared to be to exploit, or even to experiment with, Bon's vast technical resources, and it would be a mistake to take it too seriously.

The theme of guerilla warfare between a tribe of Amazons and a few stray horses, among them a White Horse who possesses a mystical power over his equine kindred, possibly holds a significance for Janine Charrat and Maurice Sarrazin who jointly devised it, but not for me.

The movements given by Charrat to the horses are not much less horse-like than those found in other ballets out of the same stable. Like most people "I know two things about a horse, one of which is rather coarse," and the more ballets we have dealing with our four-hooved friends the more tempted I am to print it.

The choreography for the Amazons has appropriate dash and vigour. All the choreography shows an easy familiarity with the classical technique, a willingness to experiment, and a sure-footed sense of dance construction. Her choreography may puzzle and exasperate, it may, as in here and in *Heracles*, be put to the service of a poor subject, but it very rarely bores on its own account.

The real interest of the ballet is in the role of the White Horse, just as the value of *Jeu de Cartes* is almost exclusively confined to the dancing of the Joker. The two parts, White Horse and Joker, have something in common; in narrative function both control the ballet's action, in choreographic conception both show a semi-acrobatic approach to classical dancing.

By now we are used to the severe demands placed on their dancers by French choreographers, demands on technique and stamina that would make the average English dancer collapse at the thought, but the prowess and energy expected of the White Horse in this ballet is enough to make even critics (to whom technique comes so much more easily than to dancers) turn pale. Fortunately Bon is equal to his task.

He is, and I think one can be fairly categoric about this, the most generally accomplished male technician of his type we have seen since the war. His *ballon* and elevation are little short of astonishing, his speed and accuracy in all types of turning movements are impressive, the neatness of all his beaten steps are nigh-on impeccable.

Charrat has used this formidable equipment for dancing, with great skill, so that he frisks about like a young foal in his paddock. One skimming *manége* follows another, as he darts in and out of the choreography with a rich variety of jumps and turns, until at the end of the ballet, high on a rostrum, he reaches the climax of his flight in a beautifully executed series of *entrechats-six*, ending with an *entrechat-huit*.

All the members of this strong company danced well. Charrat herself moves with nobility, her dancing is expansive and unskimped. The whole-hearted approach she brings to dancing, is reflected in the others, particularly the male dancers, among whom Jean Blanchard, Esteban Cerda, and an identified "grey horse" danced with great spirit.

The music by Semenoff is undistinguished but easy to listen to; film-music style—loud, clear and uncomplicated, like Gabriel's trumpet. The decor by Bazaine consists of a ramp and some distinctly drab blobs painted on curiously shaped bits of canvas. His costumes for the Amazons are rather handsome, the opulent green tunic worn by Charrat being especially praiseworthy.

Clive Barnes

Réne Bon as the White Horse in a remarkable leap. Bon will be remembered for his fine performances both with the de Cuevas company and also with Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées when he took over some of Babilée's roles, particularly that of the Joker in Charrat's Jeu de Cartes

Photo: Renoux-Frasnay

LES ALGUES

First given in Paris in 1953. First London performance by Ballets de France de Janine Charrat at the Stoll Theatre on April 6, 1954. Ballet by Louis Bertrand Castelli. Choreography by Janine Charrat. Music by Guy Bernard. Production, costumes and scenery by Louis Bertrand Castelli.

Cast

Catherine	JANINE CHARRAT
Georges Emile Guerain	PETER VAN DIJK
The Coquette	MARIA FRIS
King of the Snake Pit	JEAN BLANCHARD
The Thief	DANY COLLETIN
The Sad Lovers	ANNIK TASSIGNY, ESTEBAN CERDA
The Outwardly Happy Man	MAX ANDRE
He	ALEC GOODHEAD
The Erotomaniacs	BLANCHETTE HERMANSEN, ARTHUR BELL
The Nurses	POTKOVAC ZVONCO, RENE GOLEARD
The Gnomes	MARIE THERESE ALLIER, DRAGO PANIAN
The Notary	ALAIN DAVESNE

Peter Van Dijk and Janine Charrat in the opening scene.
Photo: Lido

ON December 3, 1947, Georges Emile Guerain was admitted to the lunatic asylum of Logeat and was registered there under the number 3412. So began the strange story of a great love. In order to be near Catherine, the person Guerain adored, he feigned madness.

In the asylum, Georges finds himself with all kinds of characters living in their own private worlds in various forms and stages of madness. Dominating them all is the King of the Snake Pit who does everything in his power to keep Georges from Catherine. In a feverish attempt to get through to Catherine, Georges tries to imitate the King of the Snake Pit, but is subsequently removed to a private cell, where the warders put him in a strait-jacket.

Lying on the floor with his limbs tethered, Georges remembers the time he first met Catherine and fell in love with her.

During a masked ball, Catherine had met Georges. The relationship into which he had drawn her had proved disastrous to her romantic and hypersensitive character, particularly when she discovered how much physical desire there was in Georges' love for her.

Eventually it is discovered that Georges is not mad and he is sent back to the normal world but he returns one December night to try and win back Catherine. It is a full moon and in the courtyard, which is out of bounds, the lunatics are indulging in one of those fantastic dances to which the mad are addicted at such phases of the moon.

Dressed in the drab garments of everyday life, Georges returns. But in spite of a brief moment of sanity, the powers of madness and the King of the Snake Pit are too strong and Catherine is caught up in a macabre farandole which draws her back into the asylum. Having bid farewell to Catherine for ever, Georges slowly and sadly leaves.

PRODUCTION

SINCE Giselle first stared mad-eyed at her silent villagers one hundred and thirteen years ago, madness has often served as theme for ballet. Now Charrat, following in the wake of Borlin, de Valois, Tudor and others, has chosen to present madness in a ballet, but what a contrast there is between her interpretation in *Les Algues* and the Romantic *scéne de folie* that helped secure immortality for *Giselle*!

Les Algues has the expressionistic realism of a film, the realism being horrifyingly shaded off into fantasy, but retaining a nightmare atmosphere of unpleasant credibility. As a production (the responsibility of Castelli) the ballet is, at first glance, a bag of tricks, each trick so obvious that no one without a glint of something near genius would dare attempt it. A flash-back, a recorded sound-track of noises, gibberings and voices, a score that includes the orchestra tuning up —all devices hackneyed by their service in films and radio-drama. Describe the ballet to me and I would call it *arrière-garde*, show it to me in the theatre and I can see it as the finest ballet yet to come out of France in this century.

The French artist, of every art-form, is extraordinarily adept at seeing beauty in squalor, finding iridescent flashes of glory in every oily puddle. This vision, together with a love for experimentation, has resulted not only in many fine novels, poems and paintings, but has also given rise in this century to characteristically French schools of cinema and ballet, the latter having its roots in the last years of the Diaghilev epoch, and flowering since the last war.

Les Algues is so typical of the country of its origin that to perceive its poetry is to comprehend an important part of the French genius. So much is this ballet the child of its time, that from it one could almost postulate the trends of twentieth century art.

The theme, as *The Observer* critic has already pointed out, has much in common with the legend of Orpheus. A modern Orpheus with no lyre and no god to help him in the quest for his Eurydice, a solitary figure, in an ill-fitting suit, going it alone against the forces of civilisation. Castelli's tragedy of love and madness is lit by the two great characters of the lovers—the man who is willing to descend to the depths of degradation following his loved one; the woman, slightly unstable, who is spun off-balance by the shock of physical love.

CHOREOGRAPHY

CHARRAT has been given by Castelli the creative chance of a lifetime and she has not failed. Her neo-classical, Lifaresque choreography (although she is far more sensitive, musical and inventive than her master) fits ideally into the ballet's framework. The beats, air-turns and spins that pepper her work are not inappropriate to the mental aberration and suffering to be portrayed. The desperate virtuosity employed by Charrat gives the choreography an air of restless, pointless energy that adds to the pathetic irony of the situation.

The first scene is diffuse in structure; this is probably intended to establish the algal helplessness of the mental home's inhabitants, but it is not entirely successful, chaos never being a particularly engrossing spectacle.

Even so this scene is far from unrewarding, the dances for Catherine and the Coquette, the attempts of Guerain to imitate the actions of the King of the Snake Pit and so regain his influence over Catherine, and many other small points of dance and production being interesting and moving.

The Petrouchka-like scene of Guerain in his cell, and the flash-backed ballroom episode are exceptionally fine passages of choreography. For the ballroom Charrat gathers together all her powers for sustained choreographic flow, and produces a picture of disturbing beauty, the more disturbing because of its dark undertones and general contrast with the rest of the ballet.

The last scene, showing Guerain's final failure, is designed on broad choreographic lines, the diffuseness of the first scene giving place to highly co-ordinated group dancing by the mental inmates, through which Guerain walks uncomprehendingly, like a lay-figure caught up in a religious ritual.

The entire choreography is enriched by a minuteness of observation (all the characters are sharply differentiated through the dancing) and a telling sense of dramatic effectiveness. Charrat permits straightforward acting (it is hardly stylised enough to be called "mime") to blend in with the dancing, yet never allows it to impede the action.

The evocative power of the whole work makes one forget that it is a ballet, or indeed any stage representation. One lives with it, thinks with it, as one does with a novel.

Dance is coming of age. Since Noverre it has been a medium for emotions; during the last fifteen years it has shown its possibilities as a medium for ideas. *Les Algues*, utilising both of these capacities, is an addition to the score or so of ballets that have given something to the development of the art.

C.B.

DANCING

I WOULD dearly like to see *Les Algues* without Peter Van Dijk and Janine Charrat. As Guerain and Catherine they are both so excellent that one would welcome the opportunity of seeing the ballet stand on its own. Their performances deserve to be remembered as among the most impressive we have seen in recent years. On them fell the onus of giving realisation to the work's strange atmosphere, and making flesh and blood creatures out of Castelli's carefully conceived characters.

Van Dijk is a remarkable dancer, a paragon among his contemporaries. Expressive from top to toe, he has that blank face, so often found in first-class actors, that becomes a scribbling-pad for his emotions. All his dancing is subjugated to, and dictated by, his sense of character. If there is a more promising dancer of his generation in the world today, London has yet to see him.

I had always regarded Charrat before *Les Algues*, as a careless classicist with a genuine but untended inner fire and a wonderful line. This ballet has showed her as an actress, sensitive and sincere. The ballet inevitably belonged to her partner, her own role being too much in the same key throughout for her to make an equal impression, but she wore her air of sweet distraction with the dignity of a luckless Elizabethan heroine. The measure of her artistry must be that never for an instant was there a hint of exaggeration.

Madness, in its more fey aspect, was also depicted with gentle delicacy by Maria Fris. Her pathetic and deranged flutterings as the Coquette inspired a feeling of genuine pity. The important role of the Dwarf was played in London by Alec Goodhead. When I first saw the ballet in Paris this part was taken by its creator, the distinguished French actor, Piéral; in spite of a fine and sensitive performance Goodhead was unable to drown the memory of the creator's menacing petulance. Jean Blanchard, who danced King of the Snake Pit in London, was dramatically rather preferable to the role's creator, Jacques Chazot, although he is not such a strong dancer.

It is incontestable that an important ballet will bring out qualities in a company that normally one would not suspect. In the past, French companies have not perhaps been notable for the sensitivity of their *corps de ballet*. But in this work all the dancers act together to give a number of firmly sketched portraits, each one of which, although almost certainly overlooked at a first viewing, adds to the ballet's total impact. In every way the performances were worthy of the ballet.

Clive Barnes

MUSIC

THE music for *Les Algues* is the result of a twelve months' collaboration between Louis Bertrand Castelli and the self-taught composer, Guy Bernard, a very gifted and versatile French art collector, Egyptologist and friend of Cocteau and Messiaen.

The score originally included two *Ondes Martinot* (an electrophonic instrument that produces musical sound not unlike that of a musical saw), but these were omitted in the re-orchestrated version heard at the Stoll.

A *tour de force* of musical craftsmanship, the score makes imaginative play with conventional tonalities and shows in its sensitive reaction to every detail of the ballet's plot, in its intensely dramatic and atmospheric hammering home of every horrific point that the composer has learned much from his considerable experience of writing for films.

The construction is of necessity episodic but the more extended opportunities of the final scene allow for some interesting fugal writing and use of jive elements. Bernard's reputed admiration of Prokofieff and Bartok is reflected in his ability to maintain perfect clarity of texture throughout some very heavy scoring and in an uncompromising directness of expression.

This is a fascinating ballet score, but even more intriguing are the strange sounds that come from the loudspeaker at the side of the stage. Apart from a somewhat superfluous spoken commentary, every now and then accompaniment is provided by spine-chilling shriekings, bursts of maniacal laughter and all manner of strange sounds that go to make up the new system of sound creation known as *Musique Concrète*. *Les Algues* makes musical and theatrical history in that this is the first instance of a public performance of *Musique Concrète* in this country.

Musique Concrète consists of unusual combinations of all types of sound—produced vocally, mechanically or electronically, recorded on tape and amplified through a loudspeaker. Along with many well known contemporary composers, Bernard is keenly interested in the musical possibilities of this new technique. His most effective use of it here is in the ballroom scene where a Khachaturian-ish waltz theme first heard in the orchestra is perverted by electronic distortion and interspersed with bursts of subhuman cackling to portray the demented mental state of the heroine.

Perhaps these sounds take us too far into the actual nightmare world of the insane to be exactly suitable for the detached, objective manner in which Castelli has treated his theme (obviously inspired by Sartre's *La Chambre*): the choreography shows us the outward manifestations of madness, the loudspeaker gives an almost clinical opportunity to experience its chaotic sensations for ourselves.

The more orthodox sounds of the conventional symphony orchestra, while not so hair-raising, are more suited to and better integrated with the classically based choreography. *Musique Concrète* makes a comparatively small contribution to the score, but suggests the possibility of a whole new field for balletic experiment and future development.

Diaghilev, I am sure, would not have hesitated for a moment to commission an entire accompaniment carried out in this exciting new medium. He would certainly have insisted on a higher standard of sound amplification than the Stoll was able to provide.

David Hunt

DECOR

SINCE the death of Christian Bérard, the designing of French ballet has taken a new turn. If trends have to be labelled at all, this new approach can best be described as Poetic Realism. Instead of the accepted form of ballet decor with its painted back-cloth and wings we now have everyday objects in-the-round mingled with painted scenery—a

Confined to a cell, Guerain (Peter Van Dijk) is tormented by the male nurses who try to get him into a strait-jacket. Other mad people, including Catherine, watch from a balcony.

Below: At the ball where Guerain first meets Catherine and her mind becomes unhinged when she realises the strength of physical passion.

Photos: Lipnitzski

The dwarf (Alec Goodhead) watches the Sad Lover (Esteban Cerda) who has a fetish for playing with matches. At one moment in the ballet he bursts a number of balloons with matches and confetti is showered over the stage. *Photo: Roy Round*

Right: The Coquette (Maria Fris) flirts with the King of the Snake Pit. He has achieved his position by the powers he is able to exercise over women; it is he who finally gets Catherine away from Guerain. *Photo: Lido*

fusion made beautiful by the particular magic which only French designers seem able to achieve.

It is not only the trend in designing which is altering but also the subject matter. Events in contemporary life are being used more and more but the treatment is similar to that which Cocteau, T. S. Eliot or Christopher Fry have brought to their poetic dramas in the straight theatre.

A lunatic asylum is hardly a subject for interesting and beautiful designing, yet what Castelli has done to his *Les Algues* amounts to possibly the most important stage decoration of the post-war years.

From the moment the curtain rises, this curious half-world takes on the quality of some strange submarine kingdom. Occasional flashes of colour give a sudden radiance. The high forbidding walls seem to be oozing with damp; the scribbles of generations of denizens of this tragic jungle give a lacework tapestry.

The door, high up in the wall with a shaft of light continually beating through a grill like an ever-watching eye, seems to guard this world as a symbol of hope for freedom and fear of further harsh discipline. Out of the shadows emerge the shapes of various objects—a row of beds, an antediluvian stove, rough tables and so on.

The centre of the wall moves forward to represent Guerain's journey to a private cell; by the time he arrives the whole set has closed in giving a feeling of intense claustrophobia. This feeling is helped further by a balcony at the back from which the lunatics in Goyaesque attitudes, watch Guerain being persuaded into a strait-jacket.

The ball scene, where Guerain first met Catherine, acts as a slight relief from these oppressive surroundings. Swags of material, coloured witch-balls and excellent lighting give an atmosphere of gaiety overshadowed by doom. The simplicity with which this effect is achieved is remarkable. A masterstroke is the use of electric fans to blow the filmy draperies about at the final exit of Guerain with the demented Catherine in his arms.

Discharged from the asylum because he is sane, Guerain returns to make a final bid for Catherine. But the power of the King of the Snake Pit is too strong and the madness of Catherine is too deep, Guerain leaves for ever. The music ceases and Guerain, with an attendant, slowly and brokenly crosses the courtyard of the asylum; the door closes on him and the curtain falls.
Photo: Ken Ross Mackenzie

The last setting, the courtyard of the asylum to which Guerain returns in a final bid to recapture Catherine, has the magnificence of a Breugel. The walls which surround two sides of the stage appear as a cold impenetrable boundary while the harsh light which comes from the interior of the asylum offers little comfort. A crude veranda festooned with naked light-bulbs seems almost a mockery; while the heat that could be obtained from the one charcoal brazier could give little warmth. The whole scene is dominated by a forbidding landscape and a full and veiled moon.

The costumes are of equal excellence. Every one of the characters is a definite person who has desperately tried to retain something of the world outside. The Coquette, in pale mauve tattered finery, clings on to her ragged parasol which at one time must have been so important to her. The female Sad Lover continually mourns in black rusted with age. The only costume which seems a bit out of place is that for the King of the Snake Pit which is a shade too fantastic with its fish-net trousers and dull orange shirt.

The dresses for the masked ball are charming and the simple use of colour is most effective. The use of veils tied across the girls' faces, instead of masks, helps to give a slightly sinister atmosphere.

The outstanding costume in the whole ballet is that which Guerain wears when he returns from the normal outside world in the last scene. Outstanding in the fact that never can the utter drabness of everyday life have been so admirably depicted. The rather short trousers and the ill-fitting coat cause him to shrink. Compared to the inhabitants of the asylum, he looks puny. When he was one of them he was a romantic figure but in the outside world he loses all identity. It is not so difficult to design costumes of fantasy but to get all the sorrow of contemporary life into a costume—that can only be achieved by a genius.

Peter Williams

curtain up!

At a party given by Phoenix House to celebrate the publication of Phyllis Bedell's My Dancing Days. *Lydia Kyasht (Ballerina of the old Empire ballet), Phyllis Bedells, Carlotta Mossetti (famous "travestie" artist and male partner), and Stanislaus Idzikovski.*
Photo: Sport and General.

At the luncheon given by English ballet critics in honour of Janine Charrat at the Hyde Park Hotel. Peter Williams, C. W. Beaumont, Ivor Guest, Janine Charrat, G. B. L. Wilson, A. V. Coton.
Photo taken by a waiter on G. B. L. Wilson's camera.

They all came to see Markova

IN her time, Markova must have broken many records, but her appearance with Milorad Miskovitch at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris on April 29, must have been unique.

Not only was the vast theatre sold out, but most of the major companies of the world made up the audience. The directors and dancers of the Soviet ballet which recently appeared at the Paris Opéra were there, thus affording their first glimpse of a British ballerina. Also present were the Martha Graham company, the Paris Opéra ballet, the Janine Charrat company, the Roland Petit Ballets de Paris (just returned from the States), and the Marquis de Cuevas company.

It is doubtful whether so many distinguished dancers have ever been gathered together to pay homage to one great ballerina.

New role for Mona Inglesby

SINCE International Ballet closed, Mona Inglesby has been far from idle. She has been concentrating on the International Ballet School in Queensbury Mews, London. A new studio has been added to the school and modern dance is now being taught by Buddy Bradley. This new move has been decided upon because Miss Inglesby believes that, with the lack of jobs now open to classical dancers, greater opportunities lie in the field of modern dance which is used in musicals, films, etc. She is determined that dancers will be fully equipped to meet this recent trend. Naturally classical dance is still the main backbone of the school.

We are pleased to report that Mona Inglesby, who in private life is the wife of Major Derrington, is expecting a baby later in the year.

Critics tribute to Charrat

AN occasion unique in the history of British ballet criticism took place at the Hyde Park Hotel on April 23. In admiration of her fine work, some ballet critics decided to give a lunch party in honour of Janine Charrat, whose company recently appeared at the Stoll Theatre, London. The critics included Cyril Beaumont, A. V. Coton, Ivor Guest, G. B. L. Wilson and Peter Williams; Arnold Haskell and Richard Buckle were unfortunately out of the country at the time. After a lunch in a private suite overlooking the park, Mr. Beaumont addressed Mlle. Charrat, expressing admiration for her work seen in England since the first time that *Jeu de Cartes* was originally given by Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées. Charrat was obviously very moved by this tribute.

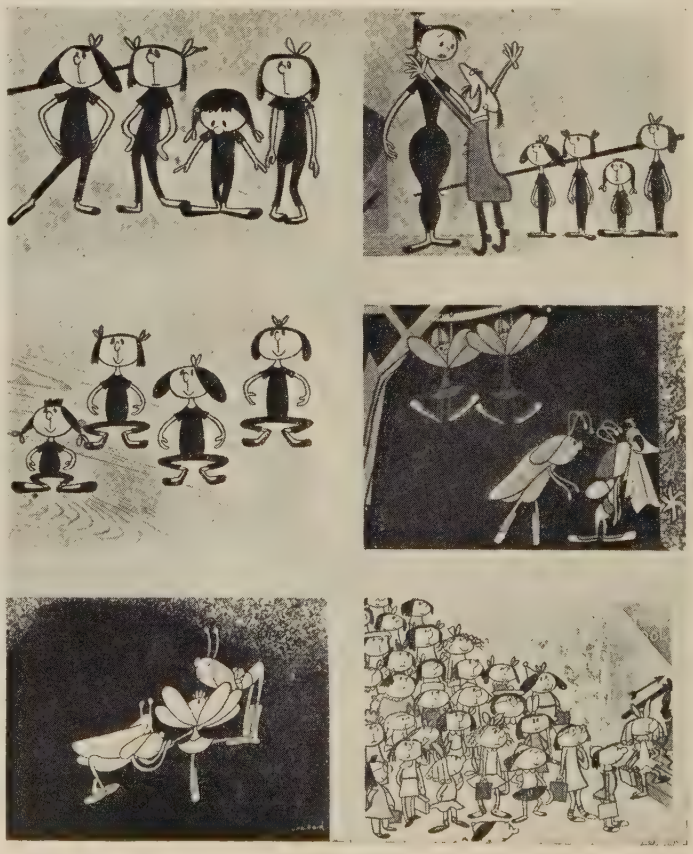
Two of the dishes on the menu were appropriate to the occasion—*Filet de Sole Grenobloise* (Charrat was born in Grenoble), and *Cassata Catherine* (after Charrat's role in *Les Algues*).

In other countries it is a usual practice for the critics to give a luncheon or dinner to distinguished visiting artists, but in England we have not always been so hospitable. It is to be hoped that this lunch to Charrat will start a precedent and that many future artists of distinction will be treated thus.

Visitors break records in Kingsway

THE Stoll Theatre has recently been breaking its own record of attendance. The final night of Antonio's season was more like a football match than anything else. Everywhere where anybody could stand or sit—everybody stood or sat. Most of the numbers were encored, with the result that a performance which should have finished at 10.45 did not end until well after midnight. The closest resemblance to this audience was the one which greets Danny Kaye at the Palladium.

The opening night of the Moscow State Dancers on April 28 was not much different except that a first night audience seldom lets itself go to such an extent as does a last night one. Nevertheless, the audience was pretty anxious to see every number twice and it was only a firm ruling on the part of



Scenes from the new U.P.A. ballet cartoon, Ballet-Oop, *shortly to be released.*

Left: Four little girls learn the art of ballet.

Right: Mr. Hotfoot, owner of the school, arrives to tell the teacher, Miss Placement, that the school has been entered for the local dance festival.

Left: The girls work hard and become less ungraceful. Their demi-pliés, arabesques and entre-chats are more successful.

Right: In front of the local townsfolk the children perform.

Left: They dance the story of the love of an apple blossom for a butterfly which is interrupted by a bee. A grasshopper is the villain of the piece.

Right: The school becomes famous overnight and hundreds of girls turn up for lessons.

the English management that stopped this happening.

Among the audience was the Dean of Canterbury, who congratulated the company backstage after the performance, and posed for a news photograph with the girls. Also present at the performance were the Soviet Ambassador, Margot Fonteyn, Violetta Elvin, Pamela May and Svetlana Beriosova.

It's a wise niece—

MARKOVA'S niece, Susie, has been at it again. After Markova had been appearing at the Albert Hall Susie was told that it might be difficult to get away after the performance owing to the huge crowd which had collected around the stage door. "But what on earth are they waiting for?" asked Susie in all innocence.

The people who queued for the best part of an hour to pay their respects to Markova after the performance would have made a sizeable edition of a *Who's Who* in any branch of society. Her dressing-room, when finally reached, closely resembled a Theatrical Garden Party.

That queue system again

TALKING point of the moment is the controversy in the *Daily Telegraph* about the queue ticket system at Covent Garden. The subject was first broached in Peterborough's column and soon spread to the correspondence columns. Despite an excellent letter from Michael Wood, Public Relations Officer at the Opera House, most contributions to the discussion have shown a remarkable ignorance of the workings of the system, which was introduced to save, not to cause, queueing for long periods.

The controversy has been made the opportunity for further attacks on the way Arts Council money is spent, and it was pointed out that no "private enterprise" theatre has such a system. But what private enterprise theatre can provide an attraction half so powerful as the Sadler's Wells Ballet?

Comics woo Terpsichore

COMICS always used to have ambition to play Hamlet, but now it would appear that their loftier aspirations are turning towards the ballet. First we had Danny Kaye in his new film *Knock on Wood* getting involved in the unlikely doings of an unlikely ballet company, now we hear that Norman Wisdom has danced in a ballet at the Palladium.

Choreographer of the Wisdom ballet is Alan Carter. Carter, who started with the Vic-Wells Ballet before the war, rose to such parts as the Blue-Boy in *Les Patineurs* and the Rake in *The Rake's Progress*, and after the war was a leading dancer with the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, is no newcomer to the task of producing ballets with an appeal to the general non-specialist audience. For some years he was choreographer to the Empire Ballet, where he regularly had to produce ballets for the stage-show supporting M.G.M. films. Films, incidentally, are one of Carter's main interests, and since helping to make *The Red Shoes*, he has been associated with many dance films. His most recent assignment was dance director on Moira Shearer's latest film, *The Man who loved Redheads*.

Those incessant bells

BALLET marriages get more numerous. Wendy Winn has left Sadler's Wells Ballet to marry John Swallow, an American musician she met during the recent U.S. tour. Melissa Hayden, ballerina of Ballet Theatre, has married Hugh Donald Coleman who is a lawyer now touring with the company as assistant stage manager. Louis Godfrey and Marilyn Burr, both soloists of Festival Ballet, have announced their engagement. Our very best wishes go out to all of them.

Rumour and fact

ISTVAN RABOVSKY is scheduled to have the leading role in a film based on the life of Nijinsky . . . . Antony Hopkins, now composing the music for Roderigues' new work for the Theatre Ballet, *Café du Sport*, has already produced one score for this company, *Etude*, a ballet by Nancy McNaught . . . . Nicholas Polajenko (formerly seen with Champs Elysées Ballet) has joined Festival Ballet . . . . Michael Charnley has produced a new intimate revue, *Intimacy at* 8.30, at the Criterion Theatre . . . . Domini Callaghan, Michel de Lutry and Denys Palmer recently appeared as guest artists at a performance by the Bristol Ballet Club . . . . the Sadler's Wells Ballet will perform *The Firebird, The Three-Cornered Hat* and *La Boutique Fantasque* at the Edinburgh Festival . . . . there is a possibility that when the Theatre Ballet returns from South Africa, Pirmin Trecu will join the Covent Garden Company . . . . Tobler Chocolates have produced a new assortment called *Ballerina*, Goya are introducing a solid perfume stick called *Ballet* . . . . Jack Carter's *Lola Montez* will probably be mounted by Ballet Rambert this summer . . . . at the time of writing it seems likely that Covent Garden will be closed for some weeks during the summer—we have heard of no visiting companies, although the Paris Opéra Ballet are strongly tipped for a short season there in the early autumn . . . .

There is no knowing where DANCE AND DANCERS *is going to turn up next. While Markova was dancing on the stage of the Royal Albert Hall on April 15, her signed picture and recommendation together with our own Pamela Black were giving a performance of their own in the foyer.*
Photo: Paul Wilson

Dancer you will know

Photo: Maurice Seymour.

MERIEL EVANS

Born in Ceylon. Started to dance in South Africa, and on returning to England she joined the Elmhurst Ballet School, Camberley, where she trained under Helen Fisher. She joined the Sadler's Wells School in 1950, *and passed into the Sadler's Wells Company in* 1951. *While still a student she choreographed two ballets* (Sursam Corda *and* The Finding of Hfi Shih) *for the R.A.D. Production Club, both of which were subsequently produced on Television.*

Principal roles: Dawn in Coppelia; *Valse in* Les Sylphides; *Polka in* Facade.

MERIEL EVANS entered the Sadler's Wells *corps de ballet* with the unusual distinction of having choreographed two ballets, both of which had been well reviewed by critics.

She soon produced evidence of her choreographic proclivities by dancing most things a little differently from the rest of the *corps*. However, in ballet more Swan Queens than not start off by being ugly ducklings, and by the end of the last season she was fully adjusted to her surroundings.

Quite rapidly she was given solo roles and in these her merits became obvious. A gentle tentative Waltz in *Sylphides* (never a good role or ballet for the newcomer), was followed by a succinct rendering of the *Facade* Polka. She gave *chic* to a dance that is nowadays usually made a cheerfully vulgar romp. This season, although unfortunately she has had no time to improve her performance, she has made a few worthwhile attempts at the role of Dawn.

By the time this appears she will have undertaken, successfully one fancies, her most important assignment to date, the Beriosova role in *The Shadow*. But whatever the outcome of that test, her ability and charm will carry her far, certainly as a dancer and possibly, who can tell, as a choreographer.

BALLERINA Elaine Fifield, wife of conductor John Lanchbery, gave birth during April to a baby girl. Her name—Margaret Selina Lanchbery—is not inspired by the title role which her mother created in the ballet *Selina*, but is the same as her grandmother's. Many congratulations to the newly formed *pas de trois*.

Igor Stravinsky

on Long Playing Records

Stravinsky conducting the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra

Scènes de Ballet:
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"Petrouchka"—Suite:
The Shrove-Tide Fair; Petrouchka's Room; Grand Carnival - - - - - - - - - - - **33C1015**

"Oiseau de feu"
("The Fire Bird")—Suite:
Introduction—Danse de l'oiseau de feu; Adagio; Jeu des princesses; Ronde des princesses; Danse infernale; Berceuse; Finale - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - **33C1010**

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NEW RECORDS

by DAVID HUNT

BALLET can be a stepping stone to a wider appreciation of the separate arts of which it is made up. When a choreographer uses existing music, we see in his ballet one man's very personal interpretation of it.

Listening to the same music away from the theatre, one must always listen to it *as music*—not like the lady I once heard criticising a conductor's *tempi* for the Brahms Fourth Symphony because they were not the same as those for Massine's *Choreartium*. Of the records reviewed this month, most are of music not written for ballet but used by choreographers. No doubt many ballet-goers will want to have recordings of Delius's *Paris* (Ashton: *Nocturne*) or Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* (Balanchine).

In cases like these, where the music has so much of its own to say, we would be doing the respective choreographers—and composers—a disservice if when listening we did not rid our minds of balletic associations.

In that way, the music will mean even more, and if it is worthy of the music, so will the ballet next time we see it.

Les Sylphides with Ulanova and Preobrazhensky, from the film Concert of Stars *now to be seen at the National Film Theatre. Both would have appeared in the flesh at the Paris Opera had it not been for the political situation in France.*

Right tempi but no atmosphere

Les Sylphides (Chopin); *Impromptu au Bois* (Ibert: Divertissement for Chamber Orchestra). Paris Conservatoire Orchestra (Roger Desormière). Decca LXT2868. 1 12in. LP, 36*s*. 5½*d*. *Les Sylphides* (Chopin orch. Douglas), Covent Garden Orchestra (Robert Irving); *Carnaval* (Schumann orch. Glazunoff, etc.), Philharmonia Orchestra (Robert Irving). HMV CLP1013. 1 12in. LP, 32*s*. 4½*d*.

THE Decca issue can be recommended to those wanting a recording of Ibert's witty *Divertissement*, of which Ruth Page made use for her *Impromptu au Bois*. The *Sylphides* performance is uninspired, and omits the opening *Prelude*.

Irving's *Sylphides* has the advantage of all other versions in that the *tempi* are those of an actual danced performance and apart from the omission of the third repeat of the danced *Prélude* all the music is given. But the atmosphere is almost completely missed and the expressionless performance of the ballet Irving conjures up is not one of which I would care to be reminded.

Irving's heavy treatment of *Carnaval* in the splendid orchestration carried out for Diaghilev by Glazunoff, Rimsky-Korsakoff and Liadoff is equally prosaic. As in performances of the ballet in recent years, the charm and fragrance are left out. Recording is first rate.

True justice to Ravel

Daphnis and Chloë—Suites Nos. 1 and 2. (Ravel). *Mermaid* (Ravel: *Alborada del Gracioso*). French National Radio Orchestra, Chorale Marcel Briclot (André Cluytens). Columbia 33CX1134. 1 12in. LP, 36*s*. 5½*d*.

UNTIL Decca issued Ansermet's magnificently successful recording of the complete ballet on LXT2775, these two concert suites were all that could be had of *Daphnis and Chloë* on records. The performance of the French National Radio Orchestra is very fine and so, too, is the recording, but Ansermet's imaginative performance of the complete score remains the obvious choice for the ballet-goer. An equally fine performance of *Alborada del Gracioso* can be had on LW5031, together with Debussy's *Après-midi d'un Faune*.

Toscanini brings wit to gala

Gala Performance. (Prokofieff: Symphony No. 1 in D. *Classical*).
An American in Paris. (Gershwin). NBC Symphony Orchestra (Arturo Toscanini). HMV ALP1107. 1 12in. LP, 36*s*. 5½*d*.

THE "Before the Performance" section of Tudor's *Gala Performance* is mimed to an abbreviated version of the first movement of Prokofieff's Third Piano Concerto, which is available in superb performances on LXT2894 and 33CX1135.

Those wanting the music for the actual "Gala Performance" should not hesitate to add this new Toscanini performance of the *Classical Symphony* to their collections. Every point of Prokofieff's witty parody on the style of the eighteenth-century symphonists emerges from the sparkling orchestral texture in crystalline clarity and the sound is without the boxed-in acoustics that have marred so many of Toscanini's recordings in recent years.

The maestro enters as convincingly into the more hectic spirit of Gershwin's *An American in Paris* and those who want a souvenir of Gene Kelly's jet-propelled film ballet will not be disappointed.

Paganini theme for fireflies

Fireflies. (Brahms: Variations on a Theme of Paganini). Charles Rosen (piano). Decca LW5092. 1 MP, 18*s*. 0½*d*.

PAGANINI'S 24th Caprice furnished Brahms and Rachmaninoff with the theme on which the former wrote two books of piano variations, the latter his *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*. Fokine's use of the *Rhapsody* for his *Paganini* was suggested by the composer, while some of the Variations have been heard as accompaniment to Gore's *Kaleidoscope* or *Fireflies* as it is now called. The Variations contain formidable difficulties and demand a virtuoso technique if they are to be played at all. Charles Rosen has all the necessary qualities and gives a brilliant performance. Piano tone is somewhat hard.

Sensitive Parisian night

Nocturne. (Delius: *Paris—The Song of a Great City*. LSO (Anthony Collins). One side of Decca LXT2899. 1 12in. LP, 36*s*. 5½*d*.

IN setting his *Nocturne* to Delius's *Night-Piece for Orchestra*, Frederick Ashton wonderfully caught the spirit of Delius's very personal vision of *la ville lumière* in all its mysterious and magical atmosphere. This is a beautifully sensitive performance of the score and the recording reproduces it all down to the last sublety of tone and impressionist texture.

The reverse is taken up by equally imaginative performances of *In a Summer Garden* and the lovely *Summer Night on the River*.

For Balanchine admirers and others

The Four Temperaments (Hindemith). Victor Aller (piano), Concert Arts Orchestra (Felix Slatkin). Capitol CCL7521. 1 10in. LP, 27*s*. 3½*d*.

I CAN imagine no Balanchine admirer with a gramophone who would not want a recording of these vividly descriptive variations. There is little to choose between this performance and the equally fine one on AXL2001 reviewed last July. String tone in the new issue is a shade thinner than previously.

Vienna wins with Mozart

Symphony Concertante. (Mozart: Sinfonia Concertante in E Flat, K364). Isaac Stern (violin), William Primrose (viola), Perpignan Festival Orchestra (Pablo Casals). Columbia 33CX1089. 1 12in. LP, 36*s*. 5½*d*. Norbet Brainin (violin), Peter Schidlof (viola), London Mozart Players (Harry Blech). One side of HMV CLP1014. 1 12in. LP, 32*s*. 4½*d*. Walter Barylli (violin) Paul Doktor (viola), Vienna State Opera Orchestra (Felix Prohaska), Nixa WLP 5107. 1 12in. LP, 36*s*. 5½*d*.

ALTHOUGH not one of these recordings of this glorious masterpiece can be recommended without some reservation each is preferable to the American version reviewed last February.

Recorded quality in the Perpignan Festival performance is much below standard and an otherwise superbly eloquent account of the music is to a great extent spoiled by a ponderously slow tempo for the middle movement. The HMV is excellently recorded, manages to squeeze the work on to one side and offers as coupling an efficient performance of the *Haffner Symphony*. But the conductor's treatment of the orchestral part is uninteresting and everything considered, the Nixa is definitely the version to have.

Here, although the actual sound is without the smoother richness of the HMV, orchestral detail comes through in much greater clarity. The Viennese musicians give a very beautiful performance that penetrates right to the heart of the music and in which Paul Doktor's warm glowing viola tone is an especial joy. We are hardly ever likely to hear such a carefully rehearsed performance as accompaniment to Balanchine's ballet.

Cockerel crows again

The Golden Cockerel—Suite. (Rimsky-Korsakoff.) Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (Sir Thomas Beecham.) One side of Columbia 33CX1087. 1 12-in. LP, 36*s*. 5½*d*.

COVENT Garden's full-scale revival of Rimsky-Korsakoff's opera, *The Golden Cockerel*, has given us the opportunity of realising to what great extent Fokine's condensed ballet version had been in effect the very quintessence of the work. This new recorded performance of the well-known suite is the most imaginative of the four LP versions now to be had and, like Fokine's ballet, shows greater understanding of the very human emotions underlying the allegory of the plot than was the case in the recent opera performances.

Recorded quality on the new issue is smooth and satisfying but lacks something of the wide-range brilliance of the previous Columbia issue.

happy birthday to...

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Joanna Bowers	Ballet Rambert	11
Beryl Grey	Sadler's Wells Ballet	11
Greta Hamby	Sadler's Wells Ballet	11
Barbara Lloyd	American National Ballet Theatre	11
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Christine du Boulay	Teacher in Chicago	12
June Greenhaugh	London's Festival Ballet	12
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Jeanette Minty	London's Festival Ballet	13
Michael Hogan	London's Festival Ballet	15
Frank Staff	In South Africa	15
Scott Douglas	American Ballet Theatre	16
Stanley Hall	Filming in Hollywood	16
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Shelagh Franklyn	London's Festival Ballet	20
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SADLER'S WELLS AT COVENT GARDEN

Sylvias, tempered and untempered

THE strongest advocates of Ashton's second full-length ballet, *Sylvia*, were possibly a little dubious of its reception in America. Perhaps it would prove one of those works that should be marked "Not for Export." But in the event it appears that the American dance public was extremely enthusiastic about this major work, and this made us all the more interested to welcome it back to Covent Garden.

Its re-appearance came when the season was some weeks old, and the standard of performance, so remarkably high and consistent at the beginning of the run, was by that time beginning to droop a little.

For this reason *Sylvia*, whose chief qualities are not of the spectacular kind in any circumstances, seemed a little duller than it need. It remained, as it must, a fine ballet, but its invention and poetry were not as evident as in 1952. Let us hope it will soon regain its old lustre.

Fonteyn as Sylvia, Somes as Aminta and Hart as Orion were all happily unaffected by the general lassitude affecting their colleagues. Fonteyn is a gracious dancer, and she can give her brilliance a beguiling softness like the effect of sunlight on a Mediterranean sea. The way her austerity is broken with an easy smile is worth watching. Somes must cease to look surprised at his own virtuosity. That he is now an equal partner with Fonteyn may possibly come as much as a pleasant shock to him as it does to us, but we, as an audience, can be permitted the luxury of amazement; he, as an artist, cannot. **C.B.**

BERIOSOVA'S *Sylvia* was first seen and acclaimed in America. In London we have eagerly awaited her performance in a role that would seem ideal for her. There was no doubt that of all the Wells ballerinas, she is the best in the first act. Her variation and the *Valse lente* were exquisitely given and one was conscious of that *frisson* only felt when faced with greatness. The only thing to mar it was a hideous black wig, which suited her in no way at all. This first act wig has not suited one of the ballerinas except Elvin, who is naturally black, and it is time some alteration was made.

Her second act was rather demure and she hardly entered into the spirit of the orgy with any of the seeming gusto which only Elvin can achieve. Nor was she well partnered by John Field (as Orion) and the whole act seems to have fallen to pieces.

In the final act she was brilliant in the *pizzicato* variation and also the *pas de deux*, but brilliant in a Russian way, where the softer and more rounded French style, which Ashton so admirably instilled into Fonteyn, would have been more suitable. The Aminta of Philip Chatfield was very good and he appeared to have regained the mastery which he had lost at the beginning of the season. **P.W.**

Giselles, old and new

THE development of Fonteyn's *Giselle* has not taken the smooth course which has marked her rise to supremacy in other roles. When she first gave it many years ago, her very youth was so touching that one overlooked certain deficiencies in technique. As she achieved technical perfection, her actual interpretation fell off. Last year it looked as though she was well on the way to mastering this most tricky of all classical roles—now I am not so sure about her.

Her first act variation, when the ballet was revived on April 19, was a staggering piece of work—she put everything she had into it and even if it did seem rather out of context it was nevertheless wonderful to behold. Right up to the mad scene, her first act held promise of being the finest performance she had ever given. Then for some reason the temperature dropped and, although the gave a carefully thought-out exhibition of madness, she failed to be moving.

Her second act can only be described as 'routine' and never reached those heights of poetry that Markova always manages to achieve. The whole performance looked as though she had put so much into the first act that she had burnt herself out.

Somes made a fine and noble Albrecht, while Anya Linden and Brian Shaw were excellent in the peasant *pas de deux*. Linden is rapidly becoming a most valuable asset to the company: she has a delightful personality which, let us hope, is allowed to develop. The lighting all through was of no assistance to anyone, least of all to James Bailey's fine decor. **P.W.**

PAULINE CLAYDEN'S performance of the title-role in *Giselle* was unexpected. With all due respect to this very talented and versatile soloist, Giselle, one would have thought, was hardly her cup of tea. And, by and large, one would have been right. She was, as Shakespeare says, "a little o'er-parted." *Giselle* at Covent Garden is a ballerina's preserve.

However, her performance in the First Act was not unrewarding, and justified her choice. At times her characterisation teetered dangerously near the edge of coyness, but it was well-calculated and had considerable charm. Her mad scene presented more pathos than passion. In the Second Act her dancing lacked style. Her movements were frequently ungainly, and she tended to dance with her mouth open.

Rassine, who has been having an extremely poor season, suddenly appeared to regain his form, and turned in a well-danced, sensitive performance as Albrecht. If he danced all his roles as well as this he would give little cause for complaint. Franklin White was also excellent as Hilarion.

The peasant *pas de deux* in Act I was danced at this performance by Peter Clegg and, making her solo debut, Cynthia Blowers. Clegg is an able classical dancer (in certain *demi-caractère* roles he is more than able) and has improved his performance in this, although it seems to make demands upon his stamina. Blowers danced prettily, with complete self-confidence. She has vivacity and a quality of smartness about her. Although there are many promising girls in the company right now, we will hear more of her.

Markova in Bolero 1830 *which she gave for the first time in London at her Royal Albert Hall concert with enormous success.*
Photo: Walter E. Owen

Satan and the Black Queen

Job has been treated as a masterpiece for so long, by authorities so eminent, that it would be perhaps rash to dismiss it summarily. In its day it was certainly a landmark in British ballet, and even now it is academically interesting as an historical specimen. Possibly its most substantial claim to be considered as a piece of living theatre is the opportunity it offers to the dancer impersonating Satan.

Blake's Satan (this "masque for dancing" is based on William Blake's illustrations to the Book of Job), like Milton's before him, has all the qualities of the epic hero. That these qualities are, for the sake of verisimilitude, debased by qualities far less heroic, does not prevent one's conception of Satan from having splendid grandeur trailing about it. It was for this reason that I personally found the vicious malignity portrayed by Helpmann in the role, totally inappropriate. Dolin (the part's original creator) in his post-war performances had much more of the manner, but to my mind the most satisfactory Satan was one less acclaimed than either of these, Harold Turner's. Turner had strength, nobility and beauty, but through all these virtues shone a power of positive evil.

Hart, the role's present interpreter, is not completely consistent in his portrayal. Satan's animal pride and arrogance are well to the fore, but at times he makes him a strutting, pompous dictator—a Mussolini in briefs. Whenever this Satan approaches his full stature, Hart manages to divest him of his glory, so the Prince of Darkness becomes demoted to a wicked Robber Baron.

COMING after a first cast that made *Checkmate* into a stalemate, the second cast to dance this ballet during the season provided a welcome change.

David Blair, dancing the role for the first time at Covent Garden, gave a splendidly virile portrayal of the First Red Knight, which was none the worse for being somewhat boyish. That faint-hearted warrior must have been incurably idealistic. Rosemary Lindsay's Black Queen had an ingratiating snakiness about it that was sinisterly convincing. The three supporting Knights, Kenneth Melville, Bryan Ashbridge and Desmond Doyle, all danced extremely well. What a good choreographer for men de Valois sometimes is!

New to the role

At the same matinee as saw this *Checkmate*, an interesting performance of *Homage to the Queen* was given.

Among the cast-changes new to us were Bryan Ashbridge as Water's Consort, and Clayden and Doyle as Queen and Consort of the Air. Ashbridge, once so gawky in solo roles, was surprisingly good in his difficult part. He produced the right degree of flamboyance and danced as well as he always does when in the *corps de ballet*, a high standard that had not before graced his solo work.

Clayden was able to give little to Fonteyn's Queen of the Air. Technically her dancing was competent, but musically the demanding variation proved rather too difficult for her. Doyle, with his bounding elevation and *ballon*, gave a promising account of her Consort. He has fully justified his promotion from the *corps de ballet*. Ronald Hynd (Ashbridge's part in Fire) and April Olrich (Jackson's part in Water) were other newcomers who danced well. **C.B.**

MARKOVA CONCERT

THE Englishman, for some reason, has a great mistrust of concert performances of the dance. I would say that the main reason for this is because the quality of the performers, who so often appear in concerts, has not always been of the highest standard. The crowd that packed into the Royal Albert Hall on April 15 showed that provided the artist is great enough she can dance anywhere she chooses.

Markova is really one of the miracles of this age and I don't think I have seen her dance better since the war. The programme was arduous, yet at the end, as she stood on the stage curtsying to all four sides (yes, a large section of the audience actually only saw her from behind), surrounded by a herbaceous border of bouquets, she looked as though she could have gone on immediately and done the whole thing again.

Owing to the odd placing of the press seats it was possible only to see the first half as if one was sitting in the wings. Nevertheless the excerpts from *Les Sylphides* were of breathtaking beauty. She floated around the Albert Hall occasionally to be brought back to earth by Milorad Miskovitch, who proved to be the ideal partner. The two of them make an immaculate and elegant pair.

Bolero 1830, which Ana Ricarda devised for Markova for these concert performances, is charming. How cleverly Markova retains the gaiety and coyness of the period without ever overdoing it! The humorous sidelong glances and the neatness of execution made a good contrast to Nijinsky's *Prélude â L'Apres-Midi d'un Faune* which followed. Placed as I was, I am in no position to criticise the performance of this work, which must be seen from the front. It was interesting to see how the movements of the Faun and the Nymph were devised in two parallel straight lines and both of them looked very good indeed.

After a sympathetic Press Representative had realised what a blunder had been made about the tickets, I was moved to a position where I could see the second half of the programme from the front. Fokine's *Dying Swan*, created for Pavlova, is a dance I have often thought should have died with her. But again Markova exploded one's prejudices and managed to be intensely moving.

Perhaps the greatest surprise of the evening was the *Casse Noisette pas de deux*. We have seen so many people plodding through this very grand *pas de deux* that it seemed as though it has been drained dry of anything fresh. Somehow Markova brings the right meaning to the whole thing. She is so dainty (in the best meaning of the word) that she really becomes a fairy, or at least what I think of when I think of fairies. Her Sugar Plum variation and Miskovitch's variation were as well danced as I have ever seen them. In the coda, Markova did a *manège* with such perfection and speed that it was a lesson to every ballerina in the world.

The whole evening was enhanced by the playing of the Philharmonia Orchestra most admirably conducted by Robert Zeller, who has a real understanding of the needs of dancers. **P.W.**

Left: Charrat as Iole, Trailine as Dejanire, Lemoine as Hercules in Charrat's ballet Heracles. *This is the encounter of Hercules with two girls. The first, Vice (Iole) tempts him with prospects of ease and pleasure. The second, Virtue (Dejanire) adjures him to work like a man so that he will find future reward. Hercules goes off with Dejanire to the fury of Iole.*

Iole gets her revenge by arousing the many-headed Hydra against Hercules. That overcome, she turns into a Hind against which he has to run a race. He catches her and succumbs to her charms. Finally, Dejanire who has grown jealous persuades him to don the shirt of Nessos which finally kills him.

Right: Helene Trailine and Jean-Bernard Lemoine in the Don Quixote pas de deux.
Photo: Lido

BALLETS DE FRANCE DE JANINE CHARRAT

THE company which opened at the Stoll Theatre on April 6 showed one of the best collections of dancers to be seen in this country for some time. Unfortunately the opening programme, as so frequently happens, did not show the company to its best advantage. Two ballets performed against black curtains gave an appearance of poverty and it was not until the final work, *Les Algues* (reviewed in full elsewhere) that the company was properly represented.

Beethoven and Poulenc

TAKING Beethoven's 1st Symphony, Charrat has made a work which some people might place in the "abstract" group. There is some very good choreography in *Symphony*, but everyone is so busy dancing so well that no single moment emerges from it. One began to long for the moment of repose or one movement devoted entirely to a *pas de deux*. Just as something beautiful was about to happen, a crowd of dancers crossed the stage and the moment was lost. Designed as the work is, to show the company, it would have been better if they had more individual things to do. In spite of this it was a treat to see so much good dancing. A properly designed setting and some more interesting costumes would have given greater effect.

With clear memories of Balanchine's *Aubade*, beautifully designed by Cassandre, for Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo before the war, I never cared much for Lifar's version of this Poulenc music when it was given in London after the war by Nouveau Ballet de Monte Carlo. Today it seems to have an old-fashioned "post-war" air about it. But this stylised version of the Diana-Acteon legend seemed to suit the fine technique of Helene Trailine and Jean-Bernard Lemoine; both of them typical of the Lifar neo-classic school.

There is a curious thing about Lifar's choreography that when he can think of nothing else to do he makes his dancers turn, a thing most French dancers do to perfection. The result is not very convincing if the ballet has a story to tell. The score remains what it always was, a magnificent ballet score and the pianist Jacqueline Emery did it full justice. It is not often that a ballet company is lucky enough to carry such a fine artist.

Dances for two people

IT was hardly fair on Trailine to follow immediately this obviously exhausting work with a performance of the *Black Swan pas de deux*. She was competent, but she would not come high in the Black Swan Stakes of the world which demands the utmost perfection (at later performances she improved considerably, and on one occasion gave it with brilliance). Her partner, Peter Van Dijk, emerged as one of the finest classical dancers we have seen. His turns, beats and elevations are remarkable; in addition, he has a beautiful lyrical quality. He has obviously had very good schooling and much of the credit must be due to his first teacher—Tatiana Gsovsky

The dancing of Janine Charrat and Van Dijk in her *Concerto de Grieg*, in the second programme on April 9, was some of the finest I have ever seen. Their combined line merged and interlaced in a series of ever-changing patterns. I still feel, as I did when I first saw this *pas de deux* at the Festival Ballet birthday gala at Festival Hall two years ago, that Charrat has not realised the emotional content of Grieg's concerto, but the choreography has an emotion of its own and the whole blends together into an exciting theatrical experience.

Another horse ballet

THE revival of Lifar's *L'Ecuyére* was brought about as Yvette Chauviré was originally going to give some guest appearances. As she had other commitments, the role of the Equestrienne was taken by Charrat. She somehow lacked the particular hard flashy quality that the role needs, nor did Peter Van Dijk seem too happy in the role of the poor young man who loves her. But as the dominating ring-master, Mr. Loyal, Lemoine was at his best and he brought a sense of dandified cruelty. Esteban Cerda achieved the pathos of the clown who loves a lady but is too frightened to do anything about it.

The ballet is full of the *clichés* so beloved of French companies—a poor young man, a circus, the sad streets, posters, a clown and death. It was all so much better done by the Champs-Elysées Ballet in the old days that really everything has already been said.

Accent on mythology

ANOTHER ballet with a Greek mythological subject, *Heracles*, tries to convey the labours and death of that most notable of health and strength young men. Lemoine had the health and strength, but the subject is not really suitable for ballet. The work is memorable for a fine *pas de deux* for Hercules and Iole (Charrat) in the guise of a hind, for a setting by Picasso's wife, Françoise Gilot, and for a score by Maurice Thiriet.

The remainder of the repertoire was made up of classical *pas de deux*—Gsovsky's *Pas Classique d'Auber* and *Don Quixote*. The former having the best performance we have seen of this *pas de deux* from Trailine and Lemoine. The latter was well given by Trailine, though Peter Van Dijk, in spite of some very good dancing, rather lacked the dash and brilliance this *pas de deux* seems to need when given in a concert version.

Taken all in all we were grateful for the opportunity of seeing such fine dancers, for getting a chance to know Charrat's choreography better. There is no doubt that of all the French choreographers seen in this country she is outstanding when it comes to dance creation; what she sometimes lacks is a sense production to make her works project. As a performer she is the best interpreter of her own works.

Young man's encounter with death

FOUR years since we have seen Babilée and Philippart in *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort* and four years is a long time when one considers how quickly a ballet can date. It was with a certain amount of trepidation that we went to see this work given during the last week of the Charrat season. We need not have feared, for it is still one of the most remarkable pieces of dance theatre (it could hardly be called a ballet) in this century.

Coming to it fresh, it was a source of amazement as to how good Petit's choreography is. Just how much was due to Petit and how much to Cocteau, probably nobody other than Cocteau and Petit will ever know, but the fitting of each seemingly casual little movement to a certain passage in the Bach C minor Passacaglia is as intricate as a Fabergé Easter egg.

Babilée has lost nothing of the poignancy he has always brought to the role of the young man driven to hang himself by a cruel young girl; he also appeared to be dancing better. Nor has Philippart lost anything except her hair (a pity, as it was important to the role). Never a great dancer, she is a fine artist with a compelling personality and a strange enigmatic beauty.

Wakhevitch's setting, made for the De Cuevas company, is not so good as the original Champs-Elysées one. The old one had been painted so many times that the walls had taken on a remarkable quality. Also the Parisian roof-tops, which should have been so effective on the large Stoll stage, looked rather a jumble. It is still, however, a masterly setting and the work itself remains a masterpiece.

P.W.

MOSCOW STATE DANCE COMPANY

THE first Soviet company of any size to appear in England turned out to be a company of about 40 girls, whose dances had a folk dance basis and the precision of the Tiller Girls. Peter Daubeny has brought many remarkable dance spectacles to the Stoll Theatre, but this was surely the most remarkable and original. We are grateful to both him and the British Soviet Friendship Society for making this visit possible. May it be the first of a number of visits of dancers from the Soviet Union.

The Moscow glide

BERYOZKA (from which the company takes its real name) is a dance fantasy on the folk song, *The Little Birch Tree*. The girls enter in pairs in a casual way until all of a sudden they are in a huge circle gliding around the stage as if on skates. It achieves an extraordinary theatrical effect. They form into groups and all kinds of patterns, ending up with a small circle with tiny birch trees growing in the centre so as to form a big birch tree. Their full stiff flame-coloured skirts hide the movements of the feet, so the impression is that it is all done on ice. Seen from above, it resembles a Busby Berkely dance routine in one of the early musicals.

There were several of these gliding numbers through the programme and it was extraordinary how Nadezhda Nadezhdina (the choreographer and artistic director) had managed to invest each of them with a completely different style, achieved by the position of the upper part of the body, the head and arms. Thus in the *Northern Dance* we had girls, some in gold, some in silver, looking

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like the nursemaids in *Petrouchka;* in the *Swan Dance,* their arms, with their puffed white sleeves, resembled a line of swans floating across a lake.

In contrast to this were a number of lively stamping dances, some of obvious Cossack origin, the most effective being the *Merry-Go-Round,* when, with the aid of coloured ribbons, they gave the impression of being on a jolly roundabout.

Virile contrast

IT was, though, in these virile numbers that the male element was missed. Admittedly two male accordionists appeared in a couple of humorous numbers, but their appearance only emphasised the lack of dancing males. The four accordionists and a solo balalaika were the only music used as accompaniment, but they made up in noise for what they lacked in numbers. Two of the numbers—*Lyric or Girlhood* and *Dance of Soviet Youth*—were accompanied by singing, which was so charming that one wished for more.

As a number, *The Dance of Soviet Youth* was the least likely to appeal to a Western audience. The white tennis dresses and the bouquets of red flowers, which each carried, smacked too much of school speech day. Otherwise the dresses were excellent—well-designed and in exciting colours—and made up for the lack of scenery. The production was slick and the lighting, particularly in the *Swan Dance,* as good as in any Hassard Short revue.

Nadezhda Nadezhdina has obviously attempted a new art form in her use of traditional steps. It has, of course, certain limitations and would be more effective if given for about an hour in a programme of another kind. But the precision, discipline and the way that the personality of each of the dancers came over was a lesson to everyone. The apparent joy that they all got from dancing was most refreshing. Let us hope that more and more of these companies can be persuaded to come to London, which seems only too willing to welcome them with open arms. **P.W.**

TELEVISION

Concerto de Grieg

Given on April 11. Choreography by Janine Charrat. Pianists, Jacqueline Emery and Tom Macall. Settings designed by Timothy O'Brien. Produced by Patricia Foy.

JANINE CHARRAT and PETER VAN DIJK.

DURING their short London season, Janine Charrat and Peter Van Dijk were able to give a performance of this work, which they recently did in Brussels on television; the choice of the Grieg Concerto was ideal, but again the dancers were not served well by the production element at Lime Grove.

In the performance of this work at the Stoll Theatre, it was presented against a background of curtains, which was quite sufficient as a setting. But, for some weird, inexplicit reason, television decided to transpose the action to the jungle, giving us a set that was thick with scrub, trees and bushes; this was not an improvement. To make matters worse, the dancers, who were both in light costumes, were flooded with lighting of every description throughout the performance; the result being that there were no contrasting tones.

Both Charrat and Van Dijk danced with a poetic sense of youthful understanding, with a wonderful feeling for Greig's music. She has devised some most attractive choreography, which shows to great effect her *port de bras,* with its delicious flowing movements. The manner with which Peter Van Dijk performed his *pirouettes* was exemplary; they bore a stamp of precision and neatness.

Strangely enough, for the closing moments of the production the lighting and camera work suddenly came to life, giving us one or two excellent shots. Surely the studio technicians might have taken the elementary step of properly cleaning the studio before the programme; at the end, both dancers looked as if they had recently emerged from a coal mine.

Markova and Miskovitch

Given on April 26. Orchestra conducted by Eric Robinson. Settings by Stephen Bundy. Produced by Philip Bate.

the programme included:

Prelude and *Waltz* from *Les Sylphides*.....Chopin
(Choreography by Michel Fokine)

Bolero 1830 .....trad.
(Choreography by Ana Ricarda)

Grand Pas de deux from *Casse Noisette* .....Tchaikovsky
(Choreography after Petipa—Ivanov)

MANY great artists in the various walks of theatrical life have been invited to appear on television; some have accepted, some have refused. A select few have rejected on the grounds that "they were ready for television, but television was not ready for them." Lime Grove was definitely not ready for our own great ballerina, Alicia Markova. Although a large audience was able to see her dance, they were not privileged to see her at her radiant best, through the fault of television, who gave her a staid, disjointed production.

The programme opened with Philip Bate introducing Markova, who was then asked to relate some of her earlier experiences with television in its pre-war days, of how she used to have to crawl under pianos and over odd props to be even able to get off the stage; ironically this only served the effect of emphasising how little television had progressed.

The first ballet sequence was the Prelude, followed by the Waltz from *Les Sylphides;* this was well danced by both Markova and her partner, Milorad Miskovitch; a more complete review of the actual dancing can be found in the article devoted to their programme at the Royal Albert Hall.

Les Sylphides was greatly abetted by an attractive setting, showing a snowy woodland glade, with the moon filtering through the trees, casting the shadows of their branches on to the ground beneath. An ideal beginning, but this high standard of production was not maintained; for the stage was then suddenly bathed in light, which it remained throughout the dance: this rudely shattered the essential mood of romantic reverie.

Before the *Bolero* 1830, Markova again spoke a few words, telling us about her costume, which was copied from a lithograph of Fanny Elssler; although this was most interesting, we were never given a good chance of seeing the dress in close-up; not only that, we were never allowed to see the end of the dance, due to some mysterious breakdown in transmission.

The dance was performed against a background of curtains, which, not being strikingly original, could have been shown up to far greater advantage by more enterprising camera work: for instance, the dance could have been given on a darkened stage, Markova being picked out by a single spot.

On the completion of the *Bolero* 1830, there was an unavoidably long delay, during which time the producer could surely have found something more interesting to show us than those familiar shots of Eric Robinson's orchestra, with which we are so familiar.

For her final talk, Markova and Philip Bate discussed the merits and significance of a Sugar Plum Fairy, which, of course, was followed by the excerpts from the *Nutcracker Suite,* without doubt the most effective dance of the programme.

Markova was exquisite; she was again well partnered by Miskovitch. What a fine young dancer he is, and what an ideal partner for her! Here again we did not have a single good close-up, one scarcely being able to even depict Miskovitch's features, the lighting and camera work being almost negligible; there was a most effective back-cloth for this dance, which gave a receding effect and the illusion of a much greater depth.

All together Markova herself danced brilliantly, but the odds were weighted too heavily against her—lack of production, polish, lighting and camera work. **Nicholas Baker**

Daphne Gray

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PARIS OPÉRA

Further homage to Diaghilev

THE last important ballet occasion of the winter, the Diaghilev performance at the Opéra, promised several interesting events: the revival with Yvette Chauviré, of *Le Spectre de la Rose;* the revival of the *Prince Igor* dances with Michel Renault; and, finally, the first performance of *L'Oiseau de feu,* which now takes it place in the Opéra repertory with new choreography of Serge Lifar.

Once more, Yvette Chauviré gave an astonishing demonstration of her romantic lyricism. As the young girl in *Le Spectre de la Rose* she succeeded in expressing the slightest shades with grace, delicacy and spirituality. The heavy skirt all too often preferred by ballerinas has been replaced by a vaporous corolla of muslin enhanced by long mauve gloves, designed by Constantine Nepo. The presence of such brilliance was not without danger for the Spectre, Jean-Paul Andréani, whose fine sense of *plastique* still lacks the necessary veneer of mystery. He has to remember that the Spirit of the Rose is not the God of youth and games.

Despite a natural attack, Michel Renault did not succeed in eclipsing the memory of Alexandre Kalioujny in the *Prince Igor* dances. The latter's breadth, his alternating nonchalance and vigour, and particularly his latent savagery were lacking. Renault plays this character part with a taking sincerity and not without talent, but the Pulcinella of *Salade* is too gay and charming to personify the ferocity and nostalgia of the Polovstian chief.

With him, Micheline Bardin was a graceful and coquettish captive, and the whole *corps de ballet* gave proof of their convincing and enthusiastic dynamism. The Opéra must also be praised for the initiative which has resulted in placing the soberly dressed chorus here and there on the stage.

L'Oiseau de Feu

Ballet fantastique by Fokine in one act and two scenes with an apotheosis, based on a Russian folk tale. Music by Igor Stravinsky. Choreography and production by Serge Lifar. Sets and costumes designed by Wakhevitch. First performed at the Paris Opéra on April 7, 1954.

The Princess	-	CHRISTIANE VAUSSARD
The Firebird	-	NINA VYROUBOVA
Köstchei -	-	SERGE LIFAR
Prince Ivan	-	YOULY ALGAROFF
Guards -	-	RAOUL BARI, RAYMOND FRANCHETTI

THE first performance of *L'Oiseau de feu* was incontestably the most important event in the *Soirée Diaghilev.* First produced on this same stage by Michel Fokine in 1910, this work quickly became known throughout the world, yet until now had not made its way into the Opéra repertory. After reviving *Petrouchka* and *Shéhérazade* in their original versions, Serge Lifar, following the example of Balanchine, deemed the time ripe to replace Fokine's choreography by a new conception. Without departing from the spirit of the legend, he has attempted to give the work greater continuity.

In some passages he has succeeded, and the harmonious figurations of the Princesses playing with the golden apple, and the attitudes in the *scherzo* of the Princess, the movements of whose hands symbolise clearly her Slav origin, will long remain in the memory.

The quivering variations and bewildered flutterings of the magic bird also reveal a very strong imaginative content, while the role of the Tsarevitch Ivan is an artistic synthesis of classical nobility and Russian character style which colours the whole score.

The haste with which this work was put on so soon after the all-absorbing revival of *Oberon* is without doubt the reason for the relative feebleness of those scenes of diabolism evoked by the immortal Köstchei. The choreographer, so celebrated for the richness of his *ensembles,* will, it is to be hoped, revise these less original passages to make them more complex and give them an element of infernal savagery. A short finale brings the characters of the tale together in an apotheosis.

To the scintillating pages of Stravinsky's score, Wakhevitch has woven a highly coloured decorative garment. He has succeeded in achieving a very happy harmony of lines and shades in the spirit of Byzantine illuminations. However, The Firebird's costume—due to the feathered headdress—appears somewhat tame and dry, and the Köstchei's beard seems a little too fluvial, as though this were some evocation of Kronos on the river Nile.

As to the interpretation, Nina Vyroubova's incomparable portrayal of the enchanted bird must be given unqualified praise. This great ballerina brings expressive mystery and a great feeling of unreality to her winged lightness. Youly Algaroff made a noble Ivan, while Christiane Vaussard was discreetly tender and moving in her shyness as the Princess.

New cast for Phèdre

YOULY ALGAROFF has appeared as Hippolyte in *Phèdre,* giving a very delicate rendering, with Nina Vyroubova in the title rôle. The fresh charm of Josette Clavier has not effaced the memory of Liane Daydé, whose fragile delicacy was so well shown off in the rôle of Aricie.

WHEN the Soviet dancers should have appeared at the Opéra, the Paris Opéra ballet went first to Geneva, where, from May 9 to 12, they gave a programme exclusively composed of French works, including *Phèdre, Suite en blanc* and *Fourberies.* Then, on May 27, 28 and 29, they appear at the Grand Théâtre, Bordeaux, during the fifth Music Festival.

BRAZILIANA

"THE principal aim of *Braziliana* is to display an art peculiar to coloured Brazilians, an art which does not derive from their white compatriots, but conveys the great contribution of the coloured folk to Brazilian culture," declares one of the founders of this company, Miecio Askanasy. This spectacle is thus still close to Africa and very different from that Latin America whose songs and dances have been presented by Joaquim Perez Fernandez.

In fact, one part of the programme is entirely devoted to the evocation of religious rites of African origin and very similar to Sudanese incantations. *Candomblé* at once transports the spectator into a strange nocturnal Bahia. The haunting rhythm of the drums, the whirling dances of incantation suggest a magic spell. Possessed one after another, priest and disciples believe themselves to be incarnations of the gods whose ample costumes they have put on. Songs and dances are authentic and do not lack interest. Likewise, *Macumba de Exu,* a dance more frenzied still in spirit, represents a ceremony consecrated to the devil Exu: a scene of real diabolic possession.

But the hallucination rapidly vanishes, giving place to several gay transpositions of ordinary life in which the negros give free expression to their easy nonchalance. If the coffee plantation, staged by José Prates, recalls the boys and girls of the music hall, and if the *Noce de Festa na roca* remains a little amateurish, the interpreters of *How the Samba was born* improvise with a fresh spontaneousness and give a dynamic picture of the *Carnaval de Rio.* The black singer, Nelson Ferraz, sang several songs, both melancholy and gay, and quietly urged the audience to join him in the popular refrains.

The dancers showed an instinctive suppleness, which would gain if they obeyed still more spontaneously in rhythms of the orchestra. Gilberto Bréa brings an undeniable conviction and a sincere charm to his youthfulness.

by Marie-Françoise Christout

NEWS IN BRIEF

ON April 30th, Martha Graham gave the first of six performances at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées.

DURING the recent brilliant visit to Moscow and Leningrad of the Comédie Française, only the actors of the company made the long voyage. Léone Mail therefore had to arrange the divertissements in Molière's *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* with the help of Soviet dancers. Having given up the direction of the *corps de ballet* at the Grand Théâtre, Bordeaux, Léone Mail has just been appointed assistant to Serge Lifar at the Paris Opera.

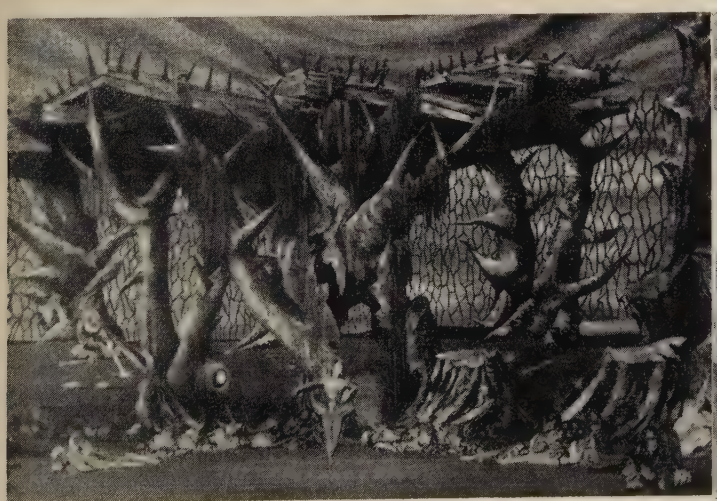
THE mime Marcel Marceau is at present on a successful tour of Germany. He plans to come to London with his company in mid-June.

PEDRO DE CORDOBA has just reappeared at the Olympia. This tempestuous Spanish dancer renders Granados' *Danza No. 5* and Manuel de Falla's Fire dance with the most fiery romanticism.

DESPITE recent political troubles, the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas has been warmly applauded in Alexandria.

YOJA VLAHOVITCH'S company of Yugoslavian students, which has appeared at the Sorbonne, has revealed several unknown or little known aspects of their country's rich and varied folklore.

ALICIA MARKOVA, accompanied by Milorad Miskovitch, gave two recitals at the Palais de Chaillot on April 29 and May 4. The programme was the same as that given some days earlier at the Albert Hall, London.



Nina Vyroubova in the second scene of L'Oiseau de Feu *when she has charmed Köstchei's creatures into sleep.*

Wakhevitch's setting for the finale when Prince Ivan and the Princess are united in marriage.

Photos: Max Erlanger

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by Arthur Todd

Jose Greco Company

RETURNING to New York after a coast-to-coast tour, Jose Greco and his company of Spanish Dancers opened a two week New York engagement at the Broadway Theatre late in April. Nila Amparo, who returned to the company this season, was featured along with Lola de Konda, Luis Olivares, Juanele Maya, Salome de Cordoba, Tina Valez and Malena Vargas. In addition, two young singer dancers, Jose Mancilla and Margarita Zurita, known as "Los Gitanillos de Bronce" ("The Bronze Gypsies"), made their New York debuts.

New dances premiered during this season included an eighteenth century *Jeurga;* a traditional Flamenco dance, "Tientos y Variaciones por Cana," performed by Mr. Greco and the Bronze Gypsies; Lecuona's *Malaguera;* "Cadiz Flamenca"; *Danza Extremena,* a duet for Jose Greco and Nila Ampara; *Jota de Alcaniz; La Venta* and *Seruiras.*

Because of their freshness, liveliness and intensity, the Bronze Gypsies made *Tientos y Variaciones por Cana* and *Cadiz Flamenca* the most noteworthy of the new works. Otherwise, the two hits of the evening were Greco's dancing of the Algerias in *La Venta* and his performance with Luis Olivares, Julio Torres and Angel Solar in *El Cortijo,* the dance of the Andalusian horsemen.

Ballet Theatre

BALLET Theatre, whose coast-to-coast tour of eighty cities ended May 22 in Boston, interrupted its national tour to give a one night gala performance at the Metropolitan Opera House on May 12 with a bill consisting of *Interplay, Giselle* and *Gala Performance.* Scheduled too late for review in this issue, this event will be reported in the July issue.

B.T. Workshop

BALLET Theatre Workshop, the experimental group sponsored by the Ballet Theatre Foundation, presented the New York premieres of five new ballets at the "Y" during late April.

William Dollar, an instructor at the Ballet Theatre School, directed this first workshop programme and he was also represented on the programme with three new ballets. *Adagio and Mazurka,* set to the Chopin Piano Concerto in F Minor; *Concerto,* choreographed to the Mendelssohn Piano Concerto in G Minor, and *Leaf In The Wind,* a *pas de deux* to music by Paul Ramsier, originally choreographed for Igor Youskevitch and Melissa Hayden for Ballet Theatre's recent tour.

In addition, there was *Out of Eden,* for which both choreography and musical score were created by Hubert Farrington, and *Umpateedle,* which was devised by Robert Joffrey to a score by John Strauss.

Petit in Hollywood

THE balance of this season's tour of the Ballets de Paris has been curtailed so that Roland Petit and his company can start rehearsals at the Metro Goldwyn-Mayer Studios, in Hollywood, for *Glass Slipper,* in which Leslie Caron will be starred.

Roland Petit will act as choreographer for this film and it now appears more than likely that an autumn tour of the West Coast and Canada will occupy the Ballets de Paris after the completion of the film.

John Butler Dance Co.

DURING the late spring season, as usual, there has been an over-full quota of off-Broadway dance concerts, recitals and lectures. Space limitations, however, make it impossible to review these at any length in this issue.

Nevertheless, dance audiences in New York have been talking about the John Butler Dance Company that made its New York City debut at the Brooklyn Academy of Music late April. Members of this group, who form the dance unit of the New York City Opera Company, premiered John Butler's *The Brass World,* to a score by Andre Jolivet, in addition to offering the first New York performance of *Marque of the Wild Man,* to a score of fifteenth century recorder music, and *Malocchio* ("The Evil Eye"), with a score by Aldo Provenzano.

By the Beautiful Sea

HELEN TAMIRIS, whose choreography for *Annie Get Your Gun* and *Touch and Go* is remembered by British audiences, has also directed the dances and staged the musical numbers for the delightful new musical, *By The Beautiful Sea,* starring Shirley Booth, that opened recently in New York. Since Shirley Booth is cast as a vaudeville performer-boarding house-keeper in this saga of Coney Island at the turn of the century, there is ample opportunity in this locale and period for a string of light-hearted dances and Helen Tamiris has devised a series that are joyous, buoyant and specially suitable to the book and production.

Particularly noteworthy was her staging of two of the song numbers. In one, *Coney Island Boat,* a delightfully capering dance was created for Miss Booth and a little boy. In another, ebullient singer Mae Barnes has been provided with a most amusing dance as part of her song, *Hang Up.* There are, as well, two major dance numbers and each is distinguished for its imagination and craftsmanship. This was especially true of *Good Time Charlie,* in which a sports sequence was danced superbly by the male ensemble.

Musicals on the horizon

THE Golden Apple, with choreography by Hanya Holm, was chosen recently by the New York Drama Critics Circle as the best musical of the 1953-54 season and, according to a recent announcement, it is more than likely that Miss Holm will be signed to provide the dances for *Fanny,* the S. N. Behrman-Joshua Logan-Harold Rome musical, now scheduled for a November 1 opening in New York. Jerome Robbins, co-director of *The Pajama Game,* which just opened in New York, and who is now directing the dances for Mary Martin's West Coast production of *Peter Pan,* has been signed as choreographer for next season's new Cole Porter musical, *Silk Stockings,* with a plot based on that of the *Ninotchka* film.

SCHOOLS

Amateur *Coppelia* in Bristol

THERE is no reason why an amateur performance of a full-length ballet given in one of England's most historic theatres should be entertaining. In fact the performance of *Coppelia* given by the Bristol School of Dancing at the Theatre Royal, Bristol, on May 3, should by all known rules of the game have been a presumptuous bore. That it was not could perhaps teach a lesson to many amateur ballet-producing organisations.

Admittedly the Bristol School had a number of advantages. They had a designer of the highest professional standards, several gifted senior students and were saved the embarrassment of dancers *en travestie* by the presence of a number of boys from the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, at which Miss Carpenter, the Ballet School's Principal, gives regular classes to the students.

They also had the use of the beautiful Theatre Royal, and certain workshop facilities from the Bristol Old Vic. But all these advantages are puny enough to pit against the production of a full-length ballet classic, and it was finally the intelligence that was evident behind every aspect of the production that gave this ambitious school its resounding and deserved success.

Elizabeth West, the ballet's producer and choreographer, had calculated all the available resources to a nicety and deployed her forces with the tactical skill of a first class infantry major. She had never seen a production of *Coppelia* and was able to take a completely free hand with the choreography, unfettered by memories of the Sergueff version upon which nearly all contemporary productions are based. She did, however, adhere closely to the Nuittier and Saint-Leon scenario.

She conceived the work entirely as a character ballet and, although Swanilda used points in the second and third acts, she reduced classical dancing to its barest minimum. The choreography was pleasing, musical and perfectly scaled to meet the capabilities of the performer. Instead of giving her dancers only what they could only do badly, she allotted to them everything they could do well; as a result the performance she obtained was excellent.

Her choreography shows a certain lack of experience, but ample amends for this was made by the professional skill shown in the production. Men, women and children were all used to make up a valid picture of the small Galician village, which was given colour by vivid touches of unforced humour.

The settings by Phyllida Law deserve the highest praise. Like the production they aimed at peasant realism rather than Toy-Town fantasy, and the sunny, dirty village square, with its slight echoes of Picasso's *Tricorne* set, was perfect for its purpose.

Even though Coppelius's workshop was not quite of such a high standard, this decor was, with the sole exceptions of those used by the Royal Danish Ballet and in the latest Covent Garden production, the most pleasing I have seen for this ballet. The gay Magyar costumes were appropriate and delightful.

The performance, utilising as it did quite a number of students from the Bristol Old Vic, was extremely well acted. The dancing was competent throughout and in certain roles attained a high level of professional quality. Maureen Corp gave Swanilda a degree of vivacity that many of her professional colleagues might envy, and she was well partnered by Tom Kneebone, who made an engaging Franz. Kneebone, like Ian Hewitson the amusing but rather too youthful Dr. Coppelius, is a student-actor.

C.B.

School of Russian Ballet

IT is usually only parents, nannies and kindly aunts who get any pleasure out of an annual students' display, but the one given by the Barbara Vernon and John Gregory School of Russian Ballet at the Institut Français on April 23 proved a most agreeable evening, even to a person unconnected with the school.

The performance was a model of its kind. None of the dances too long and following each other without those uncomfortable pauses. The whole thing well-lit and the costumes extremely well-designed by Peter Revitt. I wish all those who arrange student displays could have seen these simple colourful dresses, which so enhanced each number. The only jarring note being the unruly mops of hair worn by some of the older girls in *Fantasie Romantique* (to the John Field Suite).

The choreography, by Barbara Vernon and John Gregory, was simple and effective—nobody had to do more than they could. The simplified versions of national and character dances for the younger children were ideal for giving them a sense of the stage. It would seem that there is some promising material in this school.

P.W.

Royal Academy of Dancing

THE R.A.D. announce that the Trustees of the late Viscount Leverhulme have offered two further three-year scholarships, which they have generously increased from three to five hundred pounds for education, maintenance and vocational training. Auditions will be held at the beginning of July in Bristol, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Leeds, Nottingham and London. The entries must be of British birth and parentage and have passed their elementary R.A.D.; they must be over 13, under 16.

Maureen Corp, as Swanilda, and Tom Kneebone, as Franz, in the amateur production of Coppelia *given by the Bristol School of Dancing. The choreography by Elizabeth West was entirely new but the original scenario closely adhered to.*
Photo: R. A. Mole

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Ballet Dates

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET

May — at Covent Garden

26 *Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Somes)
28 *Sleeping Beauty* (Elvin, Hart)

June

1 *Sleeping Beauty* (Beriosova, Field)
3 *Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Rassine)
5 (M) *Veneziana, Giselle* (Heaton, Field)
5 (E) *Patineurs, Checkmate, Ballet Imperial*
7 *Sleeping Beauty* (Elvin, Hart)
10 *Sylphides, Ballet Imperial, Tiresias*
12 *Veneziana, Giselle* (Fonteyn, Somes)
15 *Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Somes)
16 *Checkmate, Ballet Imperial, Tiresias*
24 *Checkmate, Symphonic Variations, Coppelia* Act III
26 (M) *Veneziana, Coppelia* Act III, *Sleeping Beauty* Act III
26 (E) *Veneziana, Coppelia* Act III, *Sleeping Beauty* Act III

BALLET RAMBERT
at Open-air Theatre, Battersea Park, London

May 31-June 2 *Swan Lake, Movimientos, Winter Night, Facade*

June

3-5 *Sylphides, Simple Symphony, Jardin aux Lilas, Peter and the Wolf*
7-9 *Swan Lake, Plaisance, Movimientos, Peter and the Wolf*
10-12 *Sylphides, Carnival of Animals, Winter Night, Facade*

at Sadler's Wells Theatre

June

14-16 *Simple Symphony, Love Knots* (New Jack Carter ballet), *Giselle*
17-19 *Swan Lake, Lola Montez, Dark Elegies, Gala Performance*
21-25 *Sylphides*, New ballet by John Cranko, *Past Recalled, Winter Night*
24-26 *Love Knots*, New Cranko ballet, *Giselle*
28 Theatre Royal, Windsor (2 weeks)

July

26 Tor and Torrington Festival, Barnstaple

August

16 Birmingham Repertory, Birmingham (3 weeks)

September

6 Civic Theatre, Chesterfield
13 Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury

FESTIVAL BALLET
July — at Royal Festival Hall

15-24 *La Esmeralda*
26-31 *The Nutcracker, Pas de Quatre, Symphony for Fun*

August

2-7 *Swan Lake, Alice in Wonderland, Beau Danube*
9-14 *La Esmeralda*
16-18 *Sylphides, Scheherazade, Spectre de la Rose, Prince Igor*
19-21 *Sylphides, Petrouchka, Spectre de la Rose, Prince Igor*

BALLET COMIQUE

May 24 King's, Glasgow
31 New, Oxford

June

14 Royal, Newcastle
21 Pavilion, Bournemouth
28 Opera House, Manchester

BALLET FILMS
at the National Films Theatre, London

May — Great Dancers
23-26 *Pavlova, Rambert Films*
30-June 2 *Ulanova* (extracts from *Concert of Stars, Gala Festival*), *Black Swan*

June — Ballet from Five Countries

6-9 *Masowsze* (Polish), *Red Shoes* (Ballet sequence), *American in Paris* (Ballet sequence), *The River* (Indian dance extract), *Wedding at Ecser* (Hungarian), *Moor's Pavane* or *Lament* (Jose Limon)

MARKOVA TOUR
May — with Milorad Miskovitch

26 Colston Hall, Bristol
29 Theatre Royal, Dublin
31 The Stadium, Liverpool

June

4 The Dome, Brighton

Dates in these columns are correct at time of going to press.

Ballet Correspondents

(Abbreviations: b.c.—ballet correspondence; m.—male; f.—female; m.a.—my age; o.i.—other interests; ls.—languages; p.r.—photograph requested)

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NEXT MONTH

Look for Nathalie Krassovska of Festival Ballet on the cover of the July issue of *Dance and Dancers*.

In this number, A. V. Coton will start a new series of articles of interest to everyone connected with the dance.

New ballets by the Royal Danish Ballet (opinions and pictures) by Clive Barnes who has been sent specially to Denmark to write about the festival.

The choreography of Jack Cole, the famous American choreographer, by Arthur Todd.

Seraphine Astafieva—teacher of Markova, Fonteyn and Dolin—by Molly Lake.

Reviews and pictures of all important dance events all over the world.

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, by Roy Round, is of Beryl Goldwyn, ballerina of Ballet Rambert, which will be in London during June, both in Battersea Park and at the Sadler's Wells Theatre.

GOLDWYN made her debut at the age of fifteen with the Anglo-Polish Ballet. Six months later, when that company folded up, she wrote to Madame Rambert asking for tuition and work. The Ballet Rambert was then departing for Australia and was unable to take more recruits, but Rambert, sensing the young girl's promise, made arrangements for her to study at the Rambert School free of charge for two years.

When the company returned in 1949, Goldwyn joined as a soloist and danced in the programmes called *Ballet at Eight* at the Mercury Theatre. Since then her rise in the company has been steady until last year she danced the title role of *Giselle*, during Ballet Rambert's Sadler's Wells season, with such success that she was acclaimed by all the critics.

This month's back cover, also by Roy Round, is of Irving Davis, Beryl Kaye and Paddy Stone, who are appearing in the revue *Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure* opening at the Fortune Theatre in June.

IT was in their cabaret act, *Three's Company*, that the combined talents of these three dancers was first shown to its best advantage. After a great success in America at the Palmer House, Chicago, they returned to England.

Kaye, a South African, scored a big hit in *The Night and the Music*, *Finian's Rainbow*, and *Tough at the Top*. Stone, a Canadian, after being principal dancer with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, joined Sadler's Wells and then became principal dancer in *Annie Get Your Gun* and *Brigadoon*. Davis, a Welshman, was first seen in London in *Strike a New Note, Strike it Again, Sigh No More, Shepherd Show* and *Annie Get Your Gun*.

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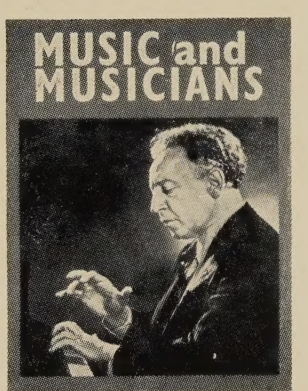

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